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ALEXANDER H. COHEN  
PRESENTS

JOHN GIELGUD'S  
PRODUCTION OF

# HAMLET

by WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

RICHARD  BURTON

HUME  CRONYN

ALFRED  DRAKE

EILEEN  HERLIE

WILLIAM  REDFIELD

GEORGE  ROSE

GEORGE  VOSKOVEC

PRODUCED FOR RECORDS BY **Goddard LieBERSON**



"The fact to be stated at once is that Richard Burton is a very fine Hamlet, indeed. His Prince of Denmark is forceful, direct, unpretentiously eloquent, more thoughtfully introspective than darkly melancholy, with the glint of ironic humor, and decidedly a man of action and feeling. And John Gielgud's production of Shakespeare's towering masterpiece is stirring and skillful, with Hume Cronyn presenting a memorable characterization of the blundering old Polonius.

Mr. Cronyn's Polonius is nothing short of superb.

The vitality and imagination of the whole production and Mr. Burton's distinguished performance provide a notable theatre event."

*Richard Watts Jr./N.Y. Post*

"Mr. Burton is, in my opinion, a most dominant and distinctive Hamlet. . . .

I believe you will come away from the Lunt-Fontanne Theatre with respect for him as a true professional and the conviction that he has brought to the role a certain vigor and compulsion which is rarely dispensed by the ethereal lads who have taken on the assignment in the past.

The illusion that all this is taking place on-stage at a rehearsal has been very skillfully carried out. The cast is of course almost overwhelming: Hume Cronyn, particularly effective as Polonius; Alfred Drake, a magnificently insidious Claudius; Eileen Herlie, buxom and beguiling as Queen Gertrude; and other expert contributions of William Redfield, George Rose and George Voskovec."

*John McClain/N.Y. Journal-American*

"Last night in the Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, Richard Burton swept mind and memory clean of all other Hamlets, in a performance so lucid and sensible that people will speak of it for years. What a problem he has posed for Hamlets to come.

Burton's Hamlet is consistent—and this is not easy to achieve with a man whose behavior embraces comedy, craftiness and murder. You are always seeing Hamlet—not Burton—and a Hamlet whose power of personality mounts

steadily as the play pursues its ever-astonishing course. As King and Queen, Alfred Drake and Eileen Herlie bring their roles the flourish we expect from two such distinguished players."

*Norman Nadel/World-Telegram & Sun*

"Richard Burton dominates the drama, as Hamlet should. For his is a performance of electrical power and sweeping virility.

Mr. Gielgud has pitched the performance to match Mr. Burton's range and intensity. It is clear early on that Mr. Burton means to play Hamlet with all the stops out—when power is wanted. He is aware of the risk of seeming to rant. For it is he who warns that the players must not tear a passion to tatters. But he is unafraid—and he is right.

I do not recall a Hamlet of such tempestuous manliness. Mr. Burton's Hamlet is full of pride and wit and mettle. He is warm and forthright with Horatio. Mr. Burton's voice is not mellifluous like those of a few highly cultivated classic actors. It has a hearty ring and a rough edge, attributes that suit his interpretation. He has a fine sense of rhythm. It is very much his own, with a flair for accenting words and phrases in unexpected ways.

Worthy of being on the stage with this Hamlet is Hume Cronyn's superbly managed and richly fatuous Polonius. As one sits through a long evening that seems all too short, one is humbled afresh by the surge of Shakespeare's poetry, by his tenderness and by his disillusioned awareness of man and his ways."

*Howard Taubman/N.Y. Times*

"Richard Burton is one of the most magnificently equipped actors living, and in John Gielgud's rehearsal clothes production of 'Hamlet' he places on open display, not only all of his own reverberating resources—a face that is illuminated in repose, a voice that seems to prove that sound spirals outward, an intelligence that hears wit when wit is trying to steal by tiptoe—but also all of the myriad qualities which the man Hamlet requires."

*Walter Kerr/N.Y. Herald Tribune*



# HAMLET

1964



# HAMILET

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## *Cast (In Order of Appearance)*

Bernardo ROBERT BURR  
Francisco MICHAEL EBERT  
Marcellus BARNARD HUGHES  
Horatio ROBERT MILLI  
Claudius ALFRED DRAKE  
Voltimand PHILIP COOLIDGE  
Cornelius HUGH ALEXANDER  
Laertes JOHN CULLUM  
Polonius HUME CRONYN  
Hamlet RICHARD BURTON  
Gertrude EILEEN HERLIE  
Ophelia LINDA MARSH  
Ghost THE VOICE OF JOHN GIELGUD  
Reynaldo DILLON EVANS  
Rosencrantz CLEMENT FOWLER  
Guildenstern WILLIAM REDFIELD  
Player King GEORGE VOSKOVEC  
Player Prologue JOHN HETHERINGTON  
Player Queen CHRISTOPHER CULKIN  
Lucianus GEOFF GARLAND  
Fortinbras MICHAEL EBERT  
A Gentleman RICHARD STERNE  
First Gravedigger GEORGE ROSE  
Second Gravedigger HUGH ALEXANDER  
Osric DILLON EVANS  
English Ambassador HUGH ALEXANDER

*Produced for Records by Goddard Lieberson*

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ALEXANDER H. COHEN  
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# HAMLET

by **WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE**

**RICHARD  BURTON**  
**HUME  CRONYN**  
**ALFRED  DRAKE**  
**EILEEN  HERLIE**  
**WILLIAM  REDFIELD**  
**GEORGE  ROSE**  
**GEORGE  VOSKOVEC**

**Philip Coolidge  John Cullum**  
**Michael Ebert  Dillon Evans**

**Clement Fowler  Geoff Garland**  
**Barnard Hughes  Linda Marsh**

**Robert Milli**

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DESIGNED BY **BEN EDWARDS** • CLOTHES BY **JANE GREENWOOD** • LIGHTING BY **JEAN ROSENTHAL**

PRODUCTION ASSOCIATES  
**GABRIEL KATZKA • ANDRÉ GOULSTON**

PRODUCED IN ASSOCIATION WITH  
**JOHN HEYMAN**



## A Note on Hamlet

by Sir John Gielgud  
from "Stage Directions,"  
published by Random House

### This Production

April the twenty third, St. George's Day, the Patron Saint's day of England was the date of William Shakespeare's birth and also of his death. This year the theatre celebrates the four-hundredth anniversary of the poet's birth, and for this quadricentennial, producer Alexander H. Cohen has assembled one of the most distinguished casts ever to grace the Broadway stage. Richard Burton who last played the title role at the London Old Vic in 1954 is recreating the part of Hamlet and Sir John Gielgud is directing the production.

HAMLET is undoubtedly the most controversial of all the Shakespearean plays. Many thousands of books have been written about the play and psychological discussion and psychiatric analysis on the subject is apparently endless. It would be impossible for any one actor to combine even a minute percentage of the various interpretations that have been placed on the character of Hamlet. Various directors have employed an assortment of methods in their attempts to demonstrate the multi-faceted Hamlet mind. One American production had three different princes walking the boards!!! Only one spoke, but each "portrayed a different side of Hamlet's character." From this welter of complexities came Sir John Gielgud's casual remark to Richard Burton: "No actor has ever really played Hamlet... one is always changing one's performance... It is a permanent rehearsal." And so this production was born. This is a Hamlet, costumed in rehearsal clothes, stripped of all extraneous trappings, so that the beauty of the language and of the acting may shine through, unencumbered by elaborate reconstruction of any particular historical period.

This performance should be imagined by the audience as a final "run-through," as actors call it. When a play has been thoroughly prepared, there is always a full final rehearsal of the text and action played straight through without interruption from the director. Properties or substitutes are provided for the actors but the costumes and scenery are yet to be added. It often happens, however, that these final adjuncts, however beautiful, may confuse and cramp the players' imaginations and intrude on the poetic imagery of Shakespeare's text.

The play has been divided into two parts. The first break comes at the end of Act III Scene I after Claudius and Polonius have overheard the conversation between Ophelia and Hamlet. The second part starts with Hamlet's instructions to the players.



The part of Hamlet is the ambition of every young actor. I played it first at the Old Vic and Queen's Theatres in London in 1929 at the age of twenty-five, and since then I have appeared in four subsequent revivals; in 1934 in London, 1936 in New York, 1939 (London and Kronborg Castle, Elsinore), and finally in London in 1944. Thus I have studied and experimented with the role for over fifteen years of my life of fifty-nine years.

How old is Hamlet according to the text? At the opening of the play he thinks of returning to school at Wittenberg, and in the last act the Gravedigger says that he is exactly thirty years of age. Does Shakespeare imply a passage of some considerable time during the course of the play, as he seems to do also in *Macbeth*? I think he does.

In any event, Hamlet must be a young man, though probably not an adolescent. And his mother must seem to be a woman of young middle age, for a Gertrude older than fifty must surely be unconvincing on the stage.

I was fortunate in being one of the first actors, I believe, in England (except for Master Betty—the child prodigy who had a short but spectacular success in the early nineteenth century) to have the opportunity of playing the part of Hamlet before I was thirty. My youthful appearance certainly told in my favor with the public, who had, over many years, been accustomed to expect in Hamlet an older, more established star. My first Hamlet was probably somewhat hysterical. The angry young man of the twenties was somewhat more decadent (and rather more affected it now seems to me) than his counterpart in the fifties and sixties, but the rebellion against convention, the violence and bitterness, has surely always been the same in every generation.

The part demands declamation, macabre humor, passionate violence, philosophical reflection. There are scenes of love and tenderness, outbursts of bitterness and despair. It is a temptation for the actor to develop the possibilities of each scene for its individual histrionic effect, instead of presenting a complete basic character in which the part may progress in a simple convincing line. Hamlet must seem to experience before the audience everything that happens to him in the course of the play, and the actor must find in himself his own sincerest personal reactions to every episode—grief at his father's death, disillusionment with his mother and Ophelia, horror and anguish with the Ghost, and so on. The scenes themselves are so strikingly dramatic that they may betray the actor into sheer effectiveness (in the theatrical sense), more easily attained than the truth

that will reveal the man himself. It was only as I grew older and more experienced that I became aware of these pitfalls (after I had worked with two or three different talented directors, and when, in two different productions, I directed the play myself as well as acting in it), though I tried continually to find a way to simplify—to use the verse and prose to express the variety of emotions conveyed so wonderfully in the text, and to balance the neurotic youthful side of the part by adding to it maturer qualities of strength, manliness and wit.

Hamlet is the many-sided, many-talented Elizabethan man—prince, son, courtier, swordsman, philosopher, lover, friend. In the Renaissance world a gifted vital man, crammed into fifty years all the variety of experience that may be spread over eighty years of life today. In the exquisite character of Hamlet there is a richness of expression, a delicate perceptivity, a general curiosity; a distinctive grace and breeding, which never degenerate into snobbery or decadence. The other principal characters—Claudius, Polonius, Laertes, Osrice, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, the foolish Ophelia, the sensual Gertrude—are shifting, worldly creatures drawn in deliberate contrast to the finer natures in the play, the forthright, sensitive Hamlet, the agonized, wronged Ghost, the steadfast, devoted Horatio, and the simple honest men, the First Player and the Gravedigger. These last three characters are the only men in the play with whom Hamlet can talk with the ease and directness which he so longs for in the world of disillusion which surrounds him.

Fortinbras, his alter ego, whom he never meets, only pervades the tragedy by hearsay, until, after once passing across the stage halfway through the action, he enters magnificently in the last scene to speak the valedictory lines on a rising note of hope.

It is sometimes lucky for an actor to tackle a great role for the first time before he is actually aware of its difficulties. I acted *Macbeth* (and *King Lear* too) before I was thirty, and, even with these dark, mature, heroic figures, I was more successful, I think, in giving a broad sketch of the characters when I attempted them with an almost naive approach, than in subsequent productions in which I had had time to realize the enormously difficult intellectual and technical problems involved. With Hamlet it was the same, though of course, long practice and experiment gave my acting in that part more assurance and skill as the years went by. On the other hand I became in the end somewhat confused in some of my decisions on readings, business, and so on, through being too ready to listen to the opinions of critics,

directors and members of the audience, some of whose suggestions were of course invaluable, but whose inconsistencies tended to confuse my imagination so that I feared to lose the essential basis of my original conception.

In spite of all its complicated problems of psychology, I believe Hamlet is what we actors call a "straight" part. The man who essays it must obviously be equipped with certain essential qualities—grace of person and princely bearing, youth, energy, humor and sensitivity. He must have a pleasing voice of great range, and a meticulous ear for verse and prose. He must be neither slow nor ponderous. He must have wit and gentleness, but also power, edge, and a sense of the macabre. He must fascinate by his quick changes of mood. The soliloquies and cadenzas must be spoken in a special way to distinguish them from the conversational scenes, but without losing either humanity, rhythm, pace or urgency. Hamlet must impress us with his loneliness and agonies of soul without seeming portentous or self-pitying. He must thrill us when he sees the Ghost, drives Claudius from the Gonzago play, stabs Polonius, reveals himself at the graveside, and throws himself upon Laertes. In no other part that I have played have I found it so difficult to know whether I became Hamlet or Hamlet became me, for the association of an actor with such a character is an extraordinary subtle transformation, an almost indefinable mixture of imagination and impersonation.

In the theatre, of course, where luck plays so great a part (but not quite as great, I think, as some people are inclined to suppose), I was particularly lucky to have the opportunities which gave me the chance I needed. I played Hamlet as I imagined him, using many of my own ideas, and helped by the directors and actors I had the good fortune to work with in various revivals in which I appeared. Hamlet, it seems to me, must be re-discovered, re-created, every ten or fifteen years. The changes in the world must affect the directors and actors who seek to create him, as well as the reactions of the audiences.

The problems of Hamlet can never be completely solved for the actor. It is a part of unexampled difficulty and, though it provides such a variety of range that no good actor can really fail in it entirely (for he is bound to succeed in certain scenes), the demands of the character are so tremendous that one feels no actor should be asked to play it more than once or twice a week. For in such a part the player must really live and die before our eyes.



# From Burbage to Burton



RICHARD BURBAGE

## The Most Coveted Role of Them All



DAVID GARRICK



JOHN PHILIP KEMBLE

Many hundreds of actors have played the part of Hamlet. It would appear to be the pinnacle of histrionic ambition.

Of the role the great impresario C. B. Cochran said: "No actor has ever completely failed and none has been perfect." Elsewhere in this book George Eells has covered the field of the *strange* Hamlets. This article deals with some of the actors who were taken more seriously by the public critics.

There is little doubt that RICHARD BURBAGE created the role at the Globe, when the play was premiered in 1602; and JOSEPH TAYLOR, who played the part "incomparably well" at the Blackfriars in 1603 (when Shakespeare played the Ghost) was also in the title role when the production was first performed at Hampton Court in 1637. THOMAS BETTERTON, was the first of the great Hamlets. He played the part for over fifty years. His last recorded performance was given at the Haymarket Theatre in 1709 when he was well over seventy. The diarist Pepys said of his earlier performances "Above all Betterton did the Prince's part beyond the imagination." Of his 1709 performance *The Tatler*, even then one of Britain's leading periodicals, said "The force of action is perfection; Mr. Betterton appeared throughout the whole drama a young man of great expectation, vivacity and enterprise," which for a man of over seventy must have been a remarkable achievement. Betterton's performance affected the audience so strongly that "the blood seemed to shudder in their veins and they in some measure partook of the astonishment and horror with which they saw this excellent actor affected when he saw the ghost."

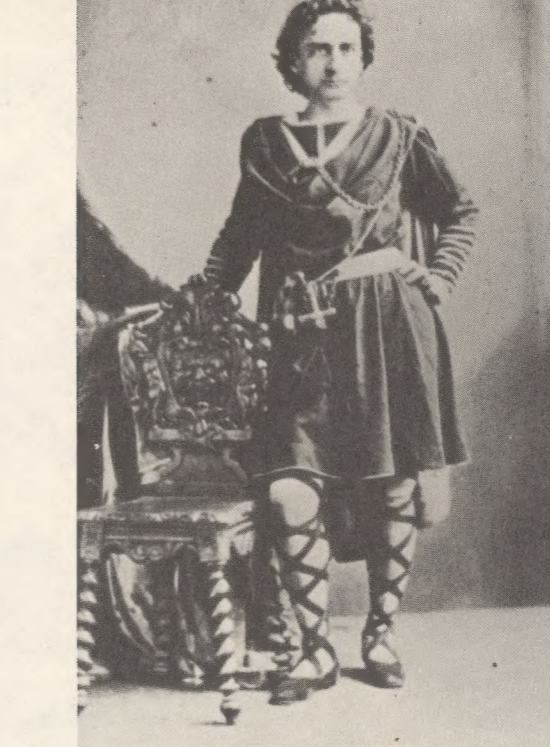
WILKS took over the role from Betterton, and despite very mixed critical reaction, continued to play the part for over thirty years, until his death in 1732.



SIR HENRY IRVING



EDMUND KEAN



EDWIN BOOTH

THURSMOND, ELRINGTON, RYAN, MILLS and GIFFARD all played Hamlet before the great GARRICK directed and acted the part in 1742. His version of the play was a somewhat strange one in that he cut out Rosencrantz's and Guildenstern's voyage to England and omitted the funeral of Ophelia and all the wisdom of the Prince and the rude jocularities of the Gravediggers. The closing of the play must have been interesting, for Hamlet bursts in upon the King, and Laertes reproaches him with his father's and his sister's deaths. The exasperation of both is at its height when the King interposes: Hamlet instantly stabs him. The Queen rushes out. Laertes wounds Hamlet mortally. We then learn that the miserable mother had dropped in a trance ere she could reach her chamber door. Hamlet joins the hands of Laertes and Horatio and commands them to unite in calming the troubled land. The old couplet as to the bodies concludes the play.

Despite this strange version, Henry Fielding (through the eyes of Tom Jones) seems to have enjoyed the performance immensely, and Francis Gentleman in the *Dramatic Censor* says that "Garrick's Variation from extreme passion to reverential awe is so forcibly expressed in his eyes, attitude and voice that every heart must feel." Generally he felt that the performance was "most happily executed." Garrick then was the second of the great Hamlets.

The third was JOHN PHILIP KEMBLE. His greatness was the more astonishing because the reputation of Shakespeare at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries had declined considerably. Hazlitt had gone so far as to say that "no play suffers so much for being put on the stage as Hamlet." Of his performance in 1800 (he had in actual fact first played the part seventeen years before) it was said "such indeed are the unrivalled



FORBES ROBINSON

beauties of Mr. Kemble's performance of the character that, frivolous and debauched as is the public taste, the play never fails to attract a crowded audience." Yet William Wordsworth and Leigh Hunt commented at this period that the "character of Hamlet seems beyond the genius of one contemporary stage." This, despite the fact that EDMUND KEAN was paid £660 (over three thousand dollars at that time) an unheard of salary, for undertaking the role in 1814.

Kean played Hamlet as "an expert, graceful fencer, a devout son of his father and a tender and even passionate lover of Ophelia." A contemporary critic described it as "a return to nature Hamlet." Hazlitt, despite many criticisms wrote that Kean seemed "more able to illustrate the soul of Hamlet than any other actor whom I have seen in the past. It was a performance of great intellectuality and sensitiveness." Kean brought his production to New York in 1820 and was the fourth man to play the role there. The first had been THOMAS HALLUM in 1761 (he was "endured") and the first American born Hamlet was JOHN HOWARD PAYNE who played the role at the age of seventeen, opening in New York in 1809.

After Kean more than a score of actors played the part before SIR HENRY IRVING first undertook it at the Lyceum Theatre in 1874. Bernard Shaw described this performance as one of "strange Lyceum intensity which comes from the perpetual struggle between Sir Henry Irving and Shakespeare." Admirers of Irving, however, included the late Lord Russell of Liverpool, who found that Irving's discovery "that Hamlet was not merely simple minded . . . was a stroke of high genius," and John Gielgud's great-aunt, Ellen Terry, said in her autobiography: "I have seen many Hamlets—FUCHTER, CHARLES KEAN, ROSSI, FREDERICK HAAS, FORBES ROBERTSON, and my





JOHN BARRYMORE



COLIN KEITH-JOHNSTON



SIR JOHN GIELGUD



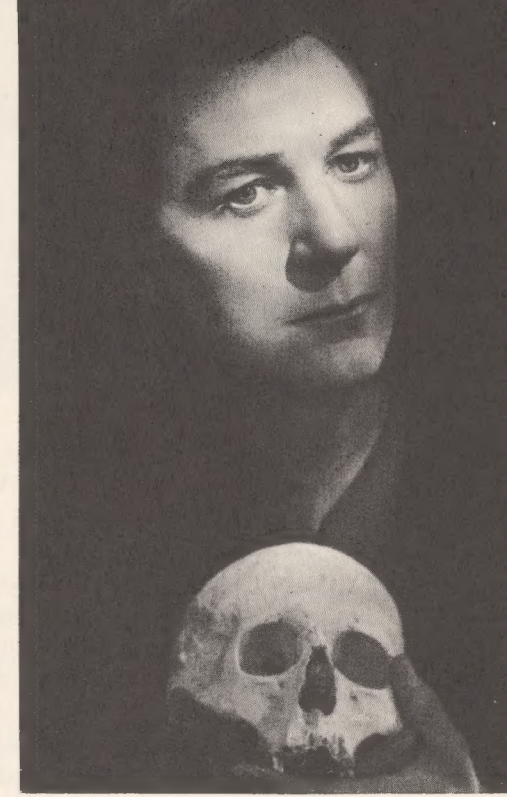
SIR ALEC GUINNESS



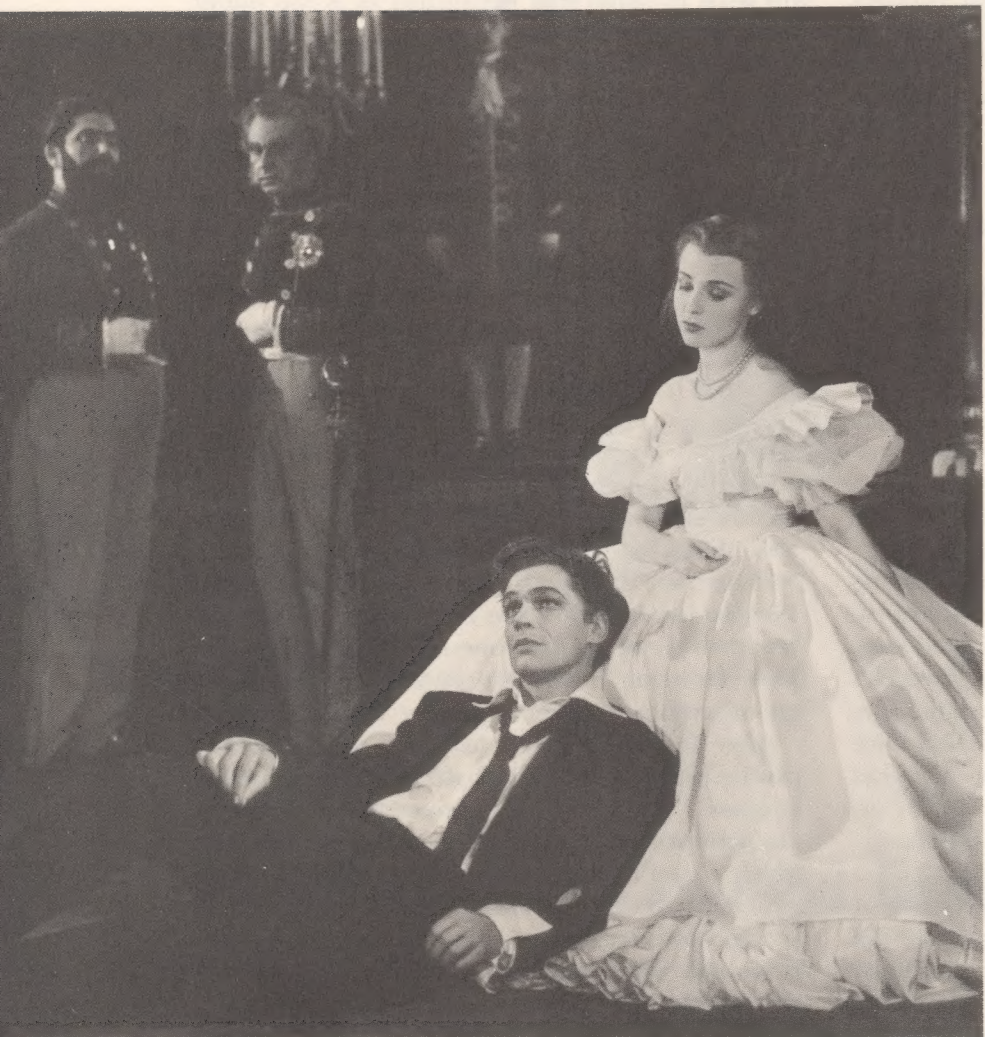
SIR LAURENCE OLIVIER



PETER O'TOOLE



SIR MICHAEL REDGRAVE



PAUL SCOFIELD WITH CLAIRE BLOOM AS OPHELIA

ROBERT HELPMANN



own son, GORDON CRAIG among them, but they were not in the same hemisphere. I refuse to go and see Hamlet now. I want to keep Henry Irving's fresh and clear in my memory until I die."

The great American actor EDWIN BOOTH, played the part between 1857 and 1891 and was followed before the turn of the century by BEERBOHM TREE, who played the part in a beard, and of whom it was somewhat unkindly said by W. S. Gilbert that he was "funny without being vulgar."

For many EDWARD H. SOTHERN's performance in 1907 at the Waldorf Theatre in New York was the most memorable performance of the era, just as for many more JOHN BARRYMORE's rendering a little over twenty years later was a performance of immense stature. E. Martin Brown says that Barrymore's performance was "full of perceptive touches but lacked inner fire" while C. B. Cochran, said that Barrymore was an actor in possession of all the graces and in whom all could see Hamlet."

SIR JOHN GIELGUD has appeared as Hamlet in four productions. Of the first in 1929, directed by Harcourt Williams, Brown says that the "unfussy production gave Gielgud the chance to show himself as the greatest Hamlet of his age." He played the role again in 1934, 1936 and 1944 and there is great controversy amongst critics as to which of these was his best interpretation. Certainly no living actor has received more passionate acclaim for his playing of the role or has a deeper knowledge of the play.

Many interesting attempts have been made to revitalize *Hamlet*. BASIL SYDNEY in America, COLIN KEITH-JOHNSTON in London and ALEXANDER MOISSI in Germany, played it in the modern dress of the twenties, (Colin Keith-Johnston actually played the part in plus fours and dinner jacket), and SIR ALEC GUINNESS in 1951 played it in London at the New

Theatre, having played it thirteen years before in modern dress. SIR LAURENCE OLIVIER edited the running time to two hours for a film version in which he played the title role and directed. At the end of last year, in the inaugural production for the National Theatre in London, Sir Laurence staged the play in full costume with PETER O'TOOLE in the title role.

When Gielgud played the role in 1936 in New York LESLIE HOWARD simultaneously played the role on Broadway. Howard's interpretation, however, was only partly a success, but the so-called Battle of the Hamlets was a feature of that year's New York theatrical season. A year later Laurence Olivier was playing the role for the first time at the Old Vic in a performance that "delighted the eye and moved the heart."

ROBERT HELPMANN who had played the part in 1944, later alternated with PAUL SCOFIELD at Stratford-on-Avon in 1948, and is probably the only actor who also starred in the ballet version of the play. SIR MICHAEL REDGRAVE played the role in 1950 at the Old Vic and RICHARD BURTON first played Hamlet at the same theatre ten years ago. Paul Scofield (whom Burton regards as one of the world's three greatest stage actors) took another production in 1955 to Moscow, this one directed by Peter Brook.

Since then almost every leading young man of the English-speaking theatre has essayed the role, although it is nearly twenty years since the play was last performed on Broadway.

Michael Todd presented the last Broadway production of *Hamlet* in 1945. This was the controversial *G.I. Hamlet* with MAURICE EVANS in the starring role. This performance equalled Sir John Gielgud's record run at the Empire Theatre nineteen years earlier.



RICHARD BURTON



WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE was born four centuries ago this April in Stratford-on-Avon, England, the third child of the seven-year old marriage of John Shakespeare and Mary Arden.

John Shakespeare was an alderman of Stratford. He owned several properties in the area, including a farm of some sixty acres, but the majority of his income came from his glove-making business. In time his stature in the district was such that he was appointed to serve on the Bench as a Justice of the Peace, whence he dispensed the Law to malefactors "with a nicely-judged mixture of severity and compassion."

It can be assumed that William went to the local free grammar school, which was open to children of all residents of Stratford. There he gained, what was for the period, a good all-round education; he studied Greek and Latin, read the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer, and became reasonably well versed in such subjects as history and geography.

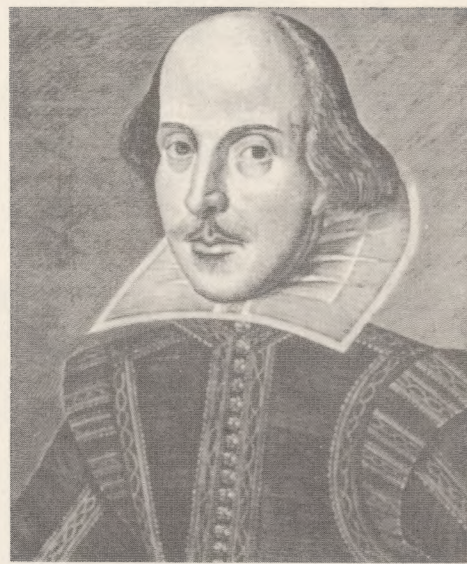
In 1577, when William was thirteen, the Shakespeare family fortune suffered severe setbacks, and, although contemporary records are obscure, it seems probable that William was apprenticed to a local trade in order that he make some financial contribution to the family exchequer.

The next occasion on which William Shakespeare's name figured in local chronicles was in 1582, when he married Anne Hathaway, a woman eight years his senior. One entry in a church register in the area credits the eighteen-year-old William with having married one Annam Whateley but opinion generally subscribes to the belief that this was a misprint for Anne Hathaway.

William and Anne's first child, Susanna, was baptised in Stratford in 1583, and twins, Hannah and Judith, were born in 1585.

At this time, however, William and his wife were forced to leave Stratford, apparently in trouble with a local property owner, Thomas Lucy, on whose estates William is said to have been poaching. The character of Justice Shallow in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* is believed by many to have been deliberately modelled on Lucy as Shakespeare's only means of revenge.

During his time as an alderman and bailiff, John Shakespeare had entertained two groups of touring entertainers. Maybe William, five years old at the



WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE  
Facsimile from the First Folio

## The Author and His Rivals



WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, HIS METHOD OF WORK  
William Shakespeare and Sir Francis Bacon,  
drawn by Max Beerbohm

time, got his first yearnings for the Theatre during these visits, for his next known activity was as an actor with the Lord Chamberlain's company, by far the most well-connected and highly thought of among the various groups of actors touring at that time. Shakespeare had undoubtedly played with other companies before joining the Lord Chamberlain's group in 1594, but the Plague caused so many theatres to be closed during the period 1592-1594 that nothing definite is known of his activities as an actor during this time.

What seems to be abundantly clear is that by 1592 he was already beginning to make his name as a playwright. Jealousy abounded among other writers of the period; one Robert Greene, in a spate of invective addressed to other writers, said: "He is an upstart crow, beautiful with our feathers, that, with his tyger's heart wrapped in a player's hide, supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blank verse as the best of you."

His first poem, *Venus and Adonis* was written in 1593, and probably his earliest sonnets belonged to this period also. *Lucrece* followed in 1594, and thereafter for the next fifteen years Shakespeare produced an average of two plays a year, though his writings were more prolific in the early part of this period.

Despite his enormous success as a playwright, he still continued to act with the Lord Chamberlain's group until 1603. The group spent most of its time in London, but undertook a provincial tour in 1597. His London headquarters was the Theatre in Shoreditch, but when this was pulled down in 1598 the group made its home at the Globe Theatre in Southwark, which, though it no longer exists, is still regarded as the spiritual home of Shakespeare's plays.

Shakespeare was regarded by critics and fellow-actors as "quite a good performer"—he is said to have played the Ghost in *Hamlet* and Adam in *As You Like It*—but opinion was unanimous that his writing talent far outshone his histrionic abilities.

From *Henry VI* in 1590 to *Henry VIII* in 1612-13 Shakespeare wrote thirty-seven plays. His most famous sonnets were probably written in the period from 1595 to 1599. *Hamlet* was completed in 1601, though it is thought that Shakespeare had already started work on it some years previously.

In 1596 William Shakespeare made enough money to pay off all of his father's debts, and, as an added

gesture he bought his father the largest house in Stratford-on-Avon. John Shakespeare died in 1601.

In May 1611 William Shakespeare bought himself a house in Stratford. *The Tempest* was reaching completion and only *Henry VIII* remained to be written. Gradually Shakespeare was cutting himself adrift from the theatrical world which had been his whole life for some twenty years. Yet he still made periodic visits to the capital. Was it to see a first or a new performance of one of his plays, or to conclude a new property deal? For by now he was a man of both substance and stature in the field of commerce as well as the theatre.

On April 23rd, 1616, the fifty-second anniversary of his birth, William Shakespeare died, leaving behind him what is regarded as the greatest collection of literary work ever written by one man. Yet the very fact that his work was so brilliant, coupled with the fact that there is comparatively little specific knowledge, and a great deal of conjecture in all of the hundreds of biographies of his life which have been published in the past three hundred years, has resulted in frequent attempts to prove that Shakespeare did not after all write the works which are credited to him.

Most popular of these stories is the contention, first voiced in 1785 by the Reverend James Wilmot, Rector of Barton-on-the-Heath, Warwickshire, that Francis Bacon was the real author of Shakespeare's plays. The first man to publish a detailed thesis on the subject was W. H. Smith whose book *Was Lord Bacon the Author of Shakespeare's Plays*, was published in 1856.

Smith's contention was that there was a tremendous disparity between the literary genius displayed in Shakespeare's writing on the one hand, and the humble origins from which he came, and the inadequacy of his education on the other. Smith maintained that "a common actor, son of a small provincial tradesman" could not conceivably have acquired such a broad knowledge of the law, politics, history and geography as must have been necessary to write the plays with which he is credited.

Smith pointed to many reasons why Bacon was the more likely author. Eighty-nine years later, in his book, *The Bacon-Shakespeare Anatomy*, W. S. Melrose echoes Smith's beliefs, adding some theories of his own—among them what he regarded as a piece

of incontrovertible proof: that certain references in the plays to works of Bacon could not have been written by Shakespeare since the Bacon works in question were not published during Shakespeare's lifetime.

I. Donnelly in 1887 claimed to have found ciphered messages in the plays proving Bacon's authorship. In 1910 Sir E. Dunning Lawrence went one better by discovering that the word "honorificabilitudinitatibus" which appears in *Love's Labour's Lost*, forms an anagram of "Hi ludi F. Baconia nati tuiti or bi"—which translates as "These Plays, the offspring of F. Bacon are preserved for the world."

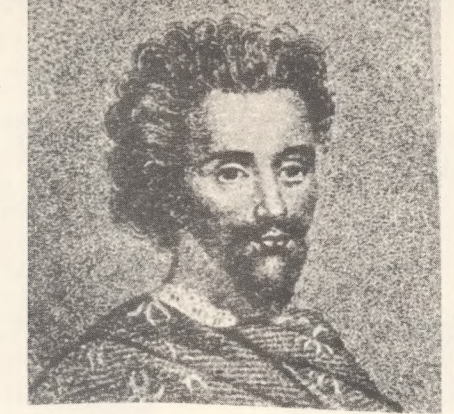
Several societies were formed, and periodicals published, at the end of the nineteenth century to support the "Bacon is Shakespeare" school of thought, but interest waned. Then in 1920 J. T. Looney started a new controversy with his book *Shakespeare Identified*.

Looney, (and others besides) claimed that the plays were really written by Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, and went so far as to suggest that de Vere had modelled the character of Hamlet on himself. This theory, like the Bacon proposition, found support in many quarters for a while, but never gained general credence.

William Stanley, Sixth Earl of Derby was another who some suggested might have been the real author. A somewhat larger faction had support for their contention that Christopher Marlowe, whose influence on Shakespeare's early work had long been recognized and accepted, had written *all* the plays. This theory, however, eventually paled to a more widely held opinion that Marlowe might well have collaborated in two or three plays, including *Titus Andronicus* and *Henry VI*.

Complicated suggestions that Marlowe had not in fact died in a fight in a Deptford public house in May 1593, but had been smuggled abroad to Italy where he wrote the plays, can scarcely be substantiated.

For every argument ever put forward to prove that Shakespeare did not write the plays, there are ten to prove that he did. The strongest contention has always been that his education and upbringing could not have produced the knowledge he would have needed to back his literary genius—yet the facts



CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE  
This is a presumed likeness  
(there is no known portrait of Marlowe)

tend to underline rather than refute the probability of his authorship.

That William Shakespeare came of humble origin means little or nothing, for at the turn of the sixteenth century poets, dramatists, and other men of high artistic merit were coming from all strata of social life. The grammar school which he presumably attended—as this was the obvious school for him to attend—produced pupils of excellent standard.

The fact that his father was a J. P. must have acquainted William with the basic background to the processes of law, and while he undoubtedly received a good grounding in the customary curricular subjects of geography, history and so on, there is nothing in any of Shakespeare's works to suggest that added erudition could not have supplied the knowledge he displayed in his work. There are obvious flaws in this knowledge. Indeed, Shakespeare's friend Ben Jonson often chided him lightheartedly for his indifferent geography.

It seems reasonable, then, to assume that William Shakespeare did in fact write the plays that bear his name. Should anyone still have any doubts, they might do worse than consider an opinion expressed by M. M. Reese in his book *Shakespeare, His World and His Work*. Leaving aside all the theories of *who* wrote the plays, why they wrote them and why Shakespeare did not, Reese concentrates on the fact that if Shakespeare didn't write the plays, a lot of people would have had to be deceived for a very long time.

"The secret," writes Reese, "could not have been kept from the actors, from Ben Jonson, from all Shakespeare's rival dramatists. If the theatrical profession could guard such a secret so closely that not a breath of it was heard for two hundred and fifty years, then nothing, not even the authorship of a syndicate consisting of Guy Fawkes and Archbishop Abbot is impossible."

Some seven years after Shakespeare's death, two of his intimates and fellow actors—Heminge and Condell—edited the First Folio Edition of Shakespeare's work. They were contemporaries; they were also actors in his company, there is no reason to doubt that they knew from personal experience what Shakespeare had written. We owe to their industry and devotion the texts that we possess today.



## Sir John Gielgud

When John Gielgud was born in London on April 14, 1904, Sir Henry Irving's *Hamlet* had already become a legend, while New Yorkers had yet to see Edward H. Sothorn play the role at the Waldorf.

Born of a theatrical family—his grandmother Kate Terry, played Ophelia at the Lyceum in 1864, and his great-aunt Ellen Terry, was an actress of international fame—Gielgud's background and upbringing were designed to lead him firmly and irrevocably towards a stage career.

Educated at Westminster he gained a scholarship to Lady Benson's Dramatic School. Instead of going to Oxford University as his parents intended, another scholarship took him to the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. His London theatre debut was, fittingly, a Shakespearean role, a part of one line as the French Herald in a production of *Henry V* at the Old Vic.

Before making his first New York appearance at the Majestic Theatre on January 19, 1928, when he played The Grand Duke Alexander in the *The Patriot*, Gielgud acted at the Oxford Repertory Playhouse (with Tyrone Guthrie and Flora Robson also in the company). He also played such widely differing roles as Charles Wykeham in *Charley's Aunt* and Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet* and understudied and took over from Noel Coward in *The Vortex* and *The Constant Nymph*. He also made some youthful successes in Chekhov plays under Komisarjevsky.

*The Patriot* was short-lived, and Gielgud returned to London in February 1928, where in September 1929 he joined the Old Vic Company.

In the 1929-30 Season he played Romeo, Antonio in *The Merchant of Venice*, Richard II, Mark Antony, Macbeth—and Hamlet.

The Old Vic production of *Hamlet* was transferred to the Queen's in Shaftesbury Avenue until Gielgud left to play John Worthing in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, a role which he was destined to play again at the Royale in New York seventeen years later.

He then rejoined the Old Vic and in September 1930 he played Malvolio in *Twelfth Night* to celebrate the reopening of Sadler's Wells Theatre. He also played Antony, Lear and Hotspur, and in May

of that year he starred as Inigo Jollifant in Priestley's *Good Companions* at His Majesty's.

*Richard of Bordeaux* in which he also acted the lead, was one of the first plays Gielgud directed. It ran for a year starting February 1933 and was by all accounts a magnificently acted and most moving production.

At the New Theatre in 1934 Gielgud both played the lead in and directed a new production of *Hamlet*, which ran for one hundred fifty five performances—a record only beaten by Sir Henry Irving with two hundred performances sixty years earlier.

Then came another Marathon run—a production of *Romeo and Juliet* in which he played for one hundred eighty-six performances, directing the play himself, and alternating with Laurence Olivier in the parts of Mercutio and Romeo. Edith Evans and Peggy Ashcroft, now both Dames of the British Empire, played the nurse and Juliet, respectively.

In October 1936, Gielgud returned to New York in *Hamlet* directed by Guthrie McClintic with Judith Anderson as the Queen and Lillian Gish as Ophelia. The production at the Empire Theatre set up a record run of one hundred thirty-two performances—a record which was equalled by Maurice Evans in 1945, but which has never been beaten.

This performance was widely acclaimed by critics and public alike—indeed such was its stature that writer Rosamund Gilder published in 1937 a book called *John Gielgud's Hamlet*, written as a narrative and based on repeated visits to the 1936-1937 New York production.

Many more parts awaited Gielgud when he returned to London, but in June 1939 he was again playing Hamlet, this time in the farewell production at the Lyceum in London just before this famous old theatre was turned into a dance hall. This production later played with great success at Kronborg Castle at Elsinore in Denmark.

During the 1939-45 war, John Gielgud divided his time between plays in London's West End—(*Dear Brutus*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Macbeth*, *Love for Love* among them) and tours for servicemen in Britain and overseas. He visited garrison theatres in Gibraltar, and in late 1945 played for British



troops in India, Egypt and South East Asia. His parts were those of Charles Condomine in *Blythe Spirit—and Hamlet*, which he acted for the last time.

After more London Theatre work in 1946 Gielgud was seen again on Broadway in March 1947 at the Royale, where he played *The Importance of Being Earnest* and *Love for Love*. He then moved to the National Theatre to portray Jason in *Medea* and Raskolnikoff in *Crime and Punishment*, before returning to England to direct the production of *The Glass Menagerie* with Helen Hayes in the part created by Laurette Taylor.

He returned to Broadway in November 1950 as Thomas Mendip in Fry's *The Lady's Not For Burning*—in which Richard Burton made his Broadway debut—but it was to be eight years before Gielgud again visited America, this time with his solo recital, *Ages of Man*, selected from George Rylands *Shakespearean Anthology*. He returned as Sir John Gielgud, having been knighted in 1953 for his services to the Theatre.

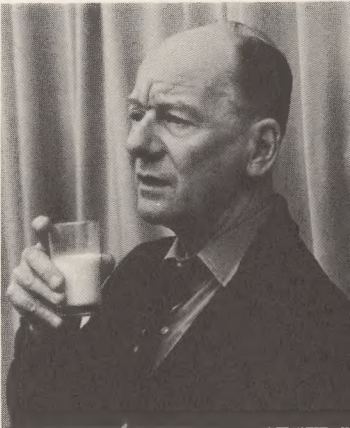
*Ages of Man* was another tremendous triumph in a career of triumphs. His subsequent presentation of this program in Paris gained him the coveted insignia of Chevalier of the Legion d'Honneur, and London acclaimed him when *Ages of Man* was presented as the first production at the new Queen's Theatre (restored after bombing during World War II) in July 1959.

Sir John visited New York again in 1962 with Margaret Leighton in *Much Ado About Nothing* which he also directed, and again in 1963 with Sheridan's *The School for Scandal*, in which he played Joseph Surface as well as directed. During this time he also directed *Five Finger Exercise* by Peter Shaffer, both in London and New York.

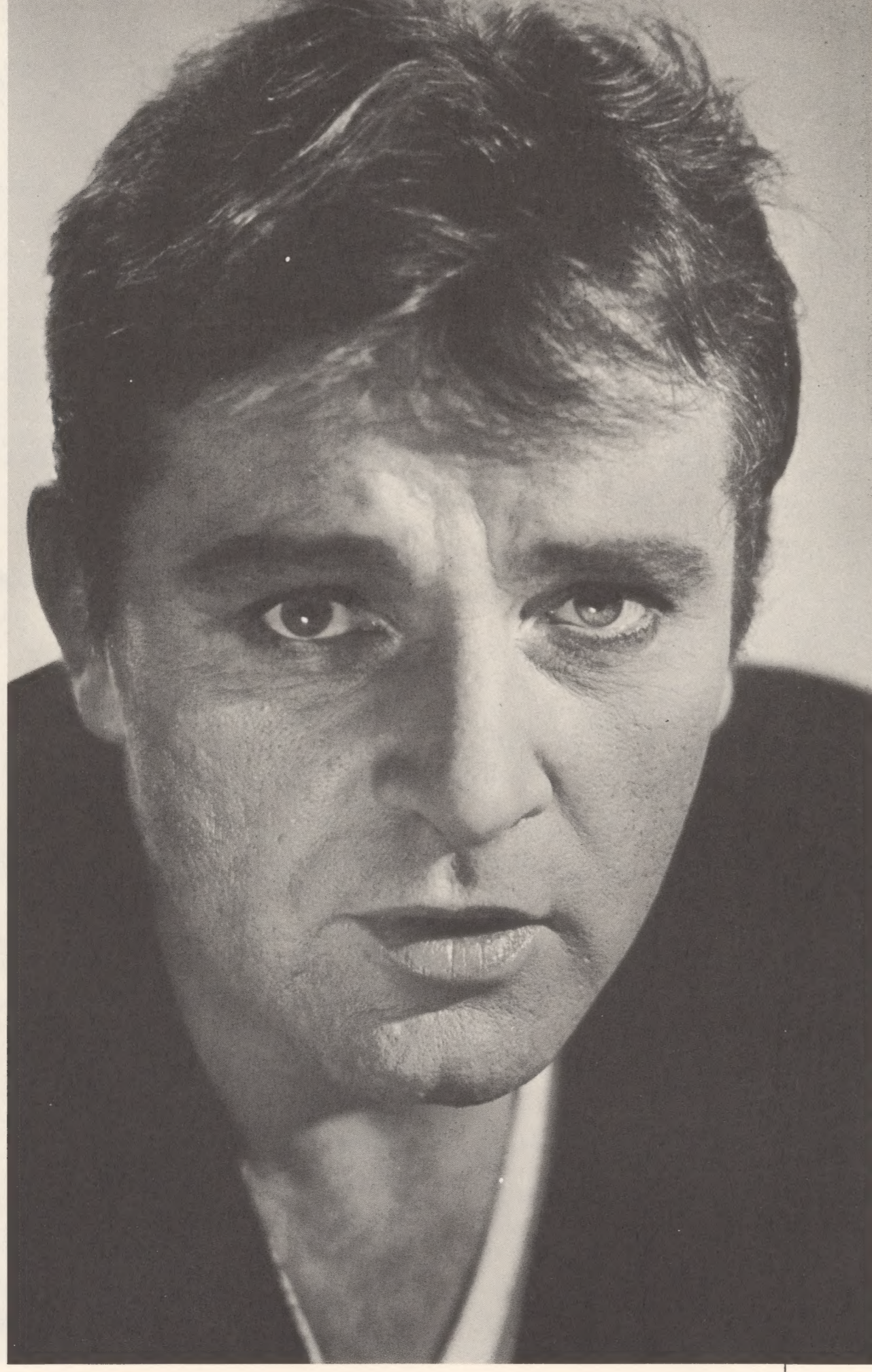
Now, after a tour of Australia and New Zealand, with *Ages of Man*, Sir John has come to America to direct *Hamlet*, in which he has himself played over five hundred times.

This production marks the third association between Sir John and Alexander H. Cohen, the latter having presented the revivals of *The School for Scandal* and *Ages of Man*.

Sir John's autobiography *Stage Directions* has just been published by Random House.







## Richard Burton

Coal, steel, Rugby footballers and erudite men are the chief products of the valleys of South Wales. Here where the grime and filth of the mines mix with the smoke of the steel works, hardship has been part of the daily diet. It was here that proud miners refused to admit their hunger and shook unused tablecloths out of their windows in a vain pretense that they had eaten. It was here that Richard Jenkins was born, the twelfth of thirteen children of a coal miner on November 10, 1925. A few years later the valleys were sunk into a general strike and before the young Jenkins had reached his second birthday, his mother had died giving birth to his youngest brother.

From the Welsh speaking home of his father at Pontrhydyfen he was moved to the English speaking steel town of Taibach, Port Talbot, where his eldest sister Cis raised him.

It is the ambition of every Welsh family to have their sons well educated. The Welsh pub is the debating society of the country and reading both the favorite hobby and mark of distinction. In the pubs were produced such massive orators as Aneurin Bevan and poets like Dylan Thomas. Money for education is not however so readily available (although it is interesting to note that Glamorgan spent more per capita on county scholarships than any other British county) and so the scholarship is the only road to success. Richard Jenkins duly won a place at the Port Talbot Grammar School.

At this school the English master was Philip Burton, now Director of the Musical and Dramatic Theatre Academy of America in New York. This teacher exercised a tremendous influence on his pupil coaching him in drama and preparing him for the university. At the age of eighteen Richard Jenkins took the name of Burton and became the ward of the schoolmaster.

To earn pocket money to aid the scholarship he won from the grammar school to Oxford University

he answered a newspaper advertisement asking for a Welsh actor. So his stage career started with Emlyn Williams starring and directing in the play *Druids Rest*. Up at Oxford he played in Shakespeare for the first time under the direction of Neville Coghill, the Magdalen don. Oxford also added to his private storehouse of English literature, of which he has a remarkable knowledge. Down from University and back into the Royal Air Force, Burton distinguished himself on the Rugby field playing to virtually international standard, occasionally fitting in some navigation, acting and, of course, reading.

He was demobilized in 1947 and decided to make the stage his career. Within seven years he had firmly established himself as one of the world's foremost actors. By 1954 he had played the longest running Hamlet the Old Vic had ever known; his *Coriolanus* had become generally recognized as the finest performance of the part in living memory and he had attracted quite sensational reviews for his performance in Christopher Fry's *The Lady's Not For Burning*, both in England and on Broadway, he had remained on Broadway to appear in *Legend for Lovers* and later, back in London captured enormous audiences for the plays *Montserrat*, *Captain Brassbound's Conversion*, *The Boy with the Cart* and *A Phoenix Too Frequent*, not to mention performances as Caliban in *The Tempest* and Sir Toby Belch in *Twelfth Night*, as well as eight film performances, including the lead in the first Cinemascope picture *The Robe* and his first American picture *My Cousin Rachel*.

Since then Burton has made eleven motion pictures including *Look Back in Anger*, and most recently he has played the title role in the film *Becket* and the lead in the Tennessee Williams *Night of the Iguana*. His last Broadway appearance was in the musical *Camelot*, another outstanding personal triumph.







BEERBOHM TREE

Illustrated material is not readily available to show the type of dress favored in the earliest productions of *Hamlet*, but it seems reasonable to assume that the actors wore contemporary clothing.

Certainly when Garrick played the role in 1742 he wore the contemporary Eighteenth Century court dress in black velvet, as did most of the other actors of that century. It was John Philip Kemble who departed from tradition, favoring the garb depicted in the famous Lawrence portrait, with a long coat and hat of plumed feathers. Other pictures depict Kemble in much more casual garb than the traditional style, though conflicting evidence suggests that during the years he played the role he may have changed the style of his costume.

A transitory period followed, with variations on the new theme demonstrated by Master Betty and Charles Young. Then Edmund Kean set a new fashion in 1814 by switching to the now-traditional Elizabethan costume normally favoured by latter-day Hamlets.

Kean's son Charles in 1838 decided to make a further change, and introduced the tunic costume, knee-length, and giving the mobility so necessary in such an active role. Some felt this garb a little strange, opining that puffed sleeves did not go well with the *full skirt* effect, but it was for a time widely adopted, notably by William Macready.

For over thirty years thereafter it would appear that there were only minor changes in dress introduced by succeeding Hamlets, and it was left to the great Sir Henry Irving to make a major change. He

## Costumes



SIR ALEC GUINNESS WITH HIS FATHER AS THE SOLDIER

introduced a happy compromise between the now-popular Elizabethan style and eleventh century Danish garb.

Clement Scott described Irving as appearing in "thick-robed silk and a jacket, or paletot, edged with fur; a tall imposing figure."

Not surprisingly H. B. Irving followed his father's lead, as did Forbes-Robertson. Edwin Booth preferred cross-gartering to plain black tights. Yet subsequent Hamlets reverted closer to tradition—among them Wilson Barrett, John Barrymore and, incidentally Sarah Bernhardt.

Beerbohm Tree was always richly attired—though unkind people said he looked like a German professor, with his fair wig and beard.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the trend moved decidedly toward Elizabethan dress as the most popular wear for productions of *Hamlet*. One notable actor who did not altogether approve of this was Sir John Gielgud himself, who is quoted as being of the opinion that "The women are not sympathetic dressed in farthingales," and goes on to say from his own experience: "Nor are the men helped in tragic or exciting scenes by the short cloaks and bolstered trunks of the period. Besides, the actors find these clothes very hot and tight to act in."

There have, of course, been previous productions of *Hamlet* in contemporary dress; contemporary, that is, in terms of the twentieth century, for Garrick's costume was 'modern' at the time. Sir Barry

Jackson's production at the Kingsway Theatre had his Hamlet (Colin Keith-Jonston) in plus fours, dinner jacket—Osric wore Oxford bags and the others in the cast contemporary modern dress.

In the same year Basil Sydney was playing in a modern dress production in New York. Later Alec Guinness starred in perhaps the best-known modern-dress *Hamlet* which was directed by Tyrone Guthrie at the Old Vic in 1939. In this version Guinness wore Rumanian uniform.

An unusual production was that of 1948 at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-on-Avon. Here Paul Scofield and Robert Helpmann alternated as Hamlet in a version dressed in the mid-Victorian period.

Many foreign productions of *Hamlet* have favored contemporary costume. That starring Alexander Moissi in Vienna in 1927, is one example, and a Hamlet in Hamburg in 1926 starring Ernst Deutsch is another.

But it is somehow surprising to find that at a time when it seemed that every Hamlet was dressed in Elizabethan clothes, it was the Japanese who in 1891 presented a production of *Hamlet* dressed in the military and court costume of the day. The production was set in Japan, and in their book "Hamlet Through the Ages" Raymond Mander and Joe Mitchenson reported that "The text was altered to conform with the native thought and speech."

No such liberties have been taken with this production.

## The Story of Hamlet

Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, is informed by his friend Horatio and two soldiers that the ghost of his father who had died two months previously is walking the battlements of Elsinore Castle. Hamlet keeps watch with them that same night, and duly encounters the ghost. His father tells him that he was murdered by his own brother Claudius now the king. He begs his son to revenge not only the foul murder, but also Claudius' hasty marriage to Gertrude, Hamlet's mother and the late king's widow.

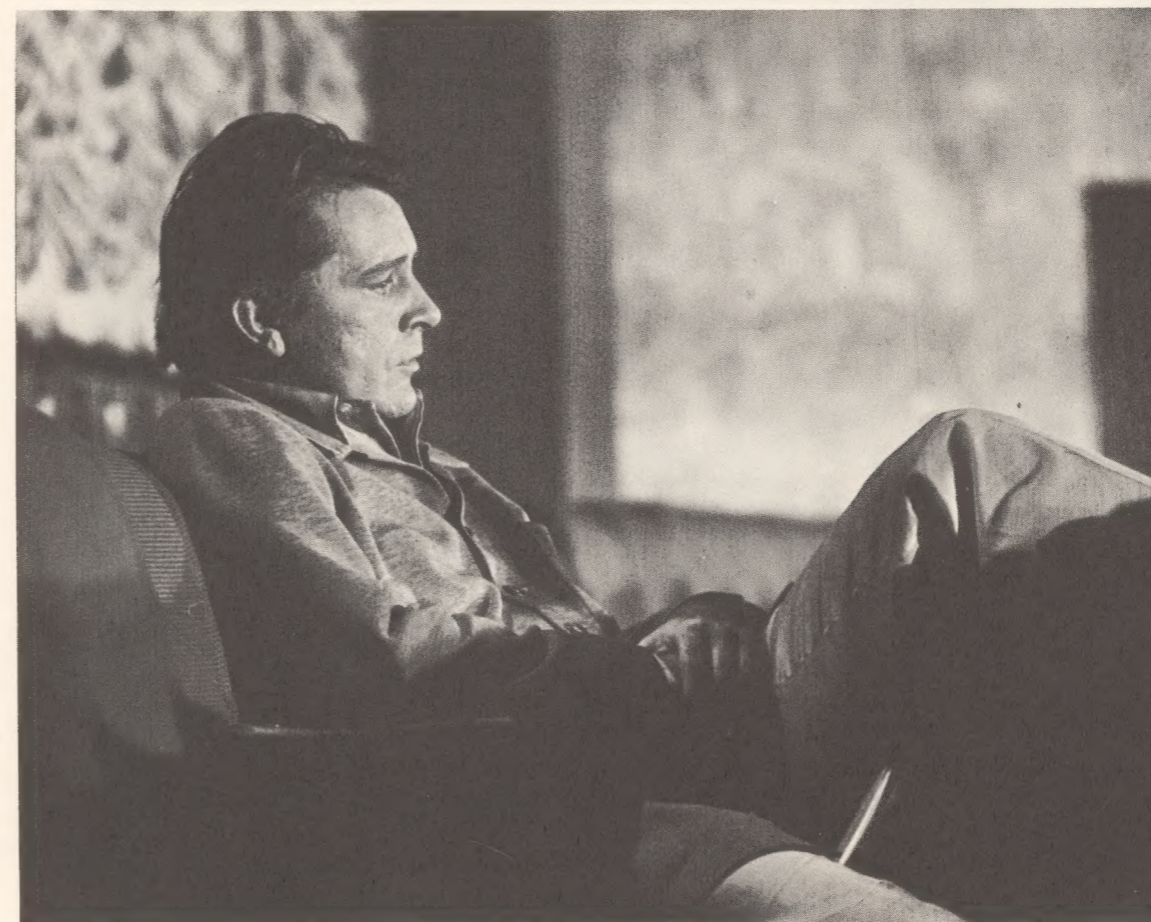
At a meeting of the court, the Lord Chamberlain, Polonius asks that his son Laertes may leave the court to further his studies. Claudius grants permission while asking young Hamlet not to go to Wittenberg.

When taking leave of his sister Ophelia, Laertes warns her against the advances of Hamlet, and a little while later she reports to her father that Hamlet has come to her chamber apparently very disturbed. Polonius is convinced that Hamlet is mad for love of Ophelia and reports this to King Claudius, who also becomes convinced, after overhearing a conversation between Hamlet and Ophelia.

A group of visiting players are invited by Hamlet to perform a play into which he inserts a passage reconstructing Claudius's murder of the late King Hamlet. Claudius's reaction convinces both Hamlet and Horatio of the ghost's honesty. After the play, Hamlet is summoned to his mother's chamber where Polonius is hiding behind a curtain. Hamlet stabs through the curtain, killing Polonius, claiming that he thought that he had killed the king. For the safety of the throne Claudius sends Hamlet to England.

While he is away Ophelia becomes insane, largely because of her father's death. She commits suicide and Hamlet, returning unexpectedly from his sea voyage, stumbles unwittingly upon her funeral service. Claudius and Laertes hatch a plot to kill Hamlet, Laertes in order to revenge his father's murder and his sister's suicide, and Claudius because he realizes the danger to his own person. Hamlet is challenged to a duel with Laertes; Laertes' foil is poisoned. To make doubly sure that Hamlet will die, Claudius orders poisoned refreshments for the Prince.

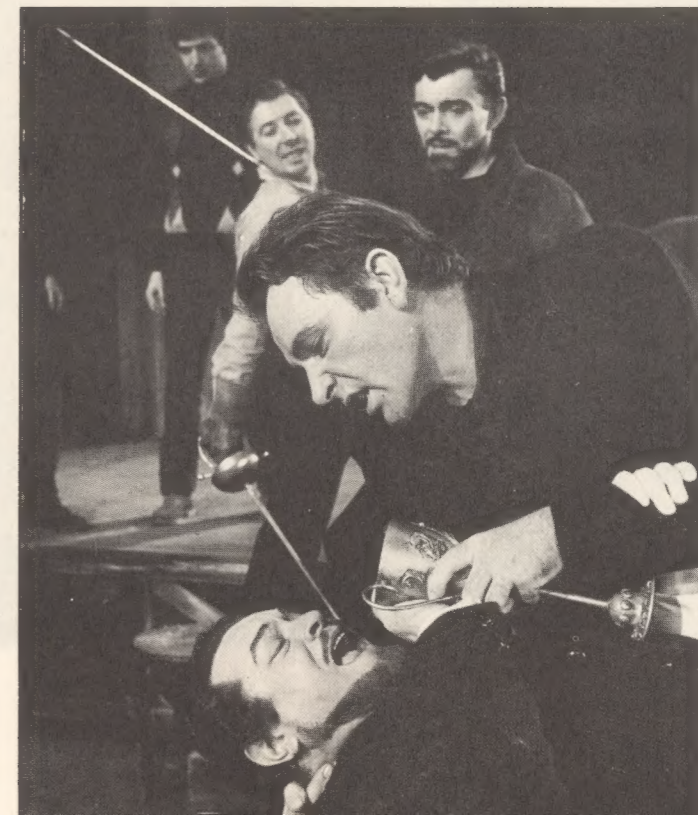
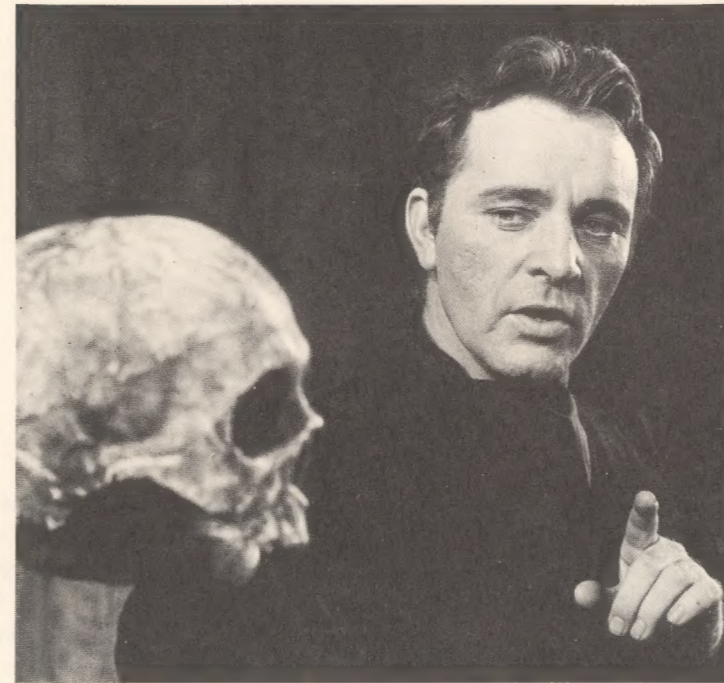
In the duel Laertes mortally wounds Hamlet. In a scuffle the rapiers are exchanged and Hamlet kills Laertes and then stabs the king to death. Gertrude drinks the poisoned cup intended for her son and also dies. In this carnage the play ends with Hamlet's body being carried in honor to the battlements.







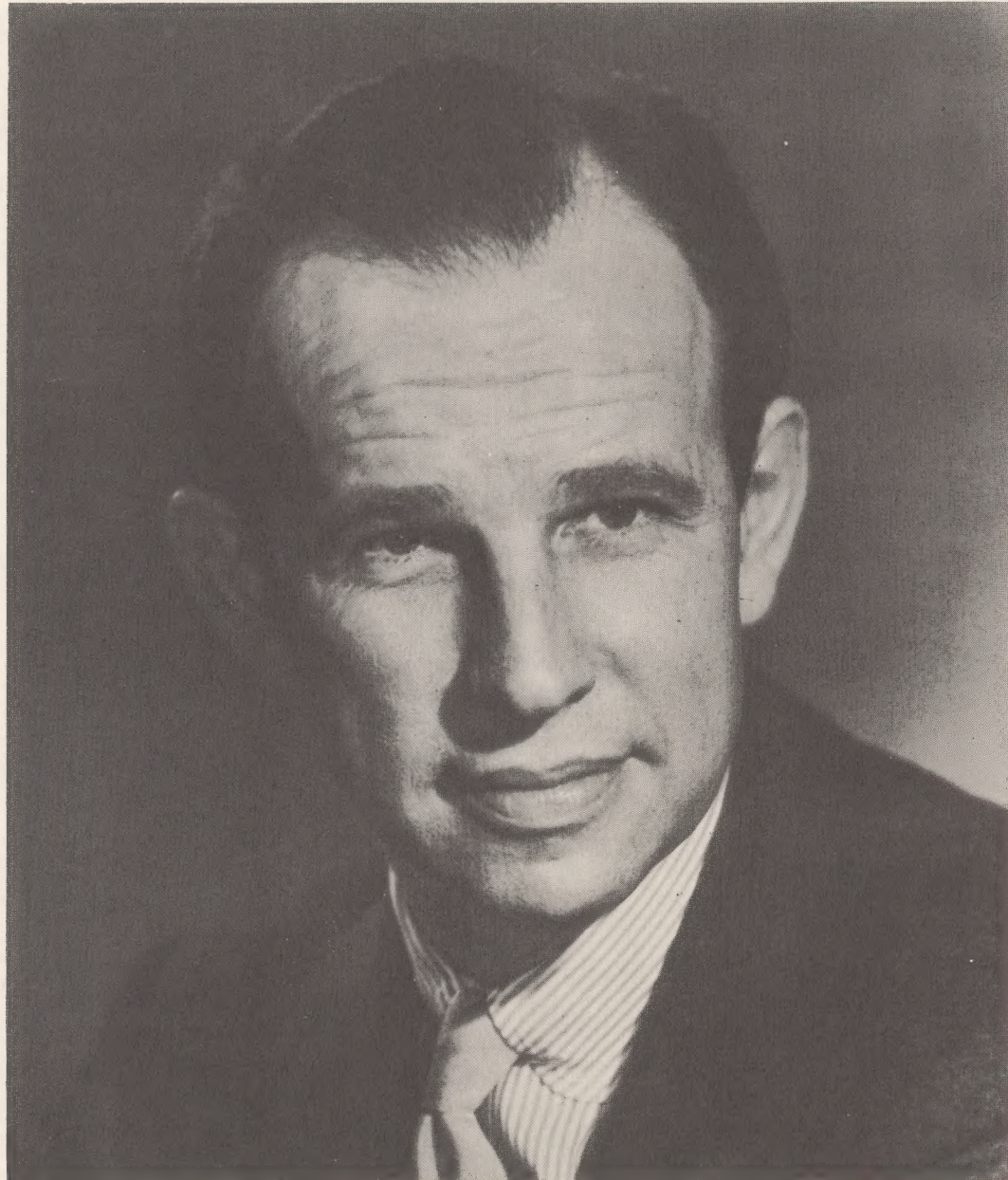
# Hamlet



PHOTOGRAPHS BY FRIEDMAN-ABELES



## Hume Cronyn



A McGill University trained lawyer, actor-writer-director Hume Cronyn has spent over thirty years in the theatre. Born in London, Ontario, he turned away from his father's interests, politics and high-finance, and from his own legal career, when he was nominated for Canada's Olympic Boxing team in 1932. He stayed the summer in Europe, studying under Max Reinhardt, before attending the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York. From his Broadway debut in 1934 until the start of the Second World War, Mr. Cronyn was hardly ever off the stage—*Three Men on a Horse* (1935), *Boy Meets Girl* (1936), *Room Service* (1937), *High Tor* (1937), *There's Always a Breeze* (1938), and *The Three Sisters* (1939). His motion picture debut was in Alfred Hitchcock's *Shadow of a Doubt*, in 1943. There followed eight more pictures including *A Letter for Evie*, *The Green Years*, and *Brute Force* before he returned to Broadway in *The Survivors* in 1948. There followed an ANTA tour in which he played *Hamlet*, and then on October 24, 1951, he and his wife, Jessica Tandy, appeared in a simple little two character play, *The Fourposter*, which ran for over two years. *Madam Will You Walk?*, *The Honeys* and *A Day by the Sea*, and then Mr. Cronyn embarked on two intensive years on television, including many appearances on *Omnibus* and the TV version of *The Fourposter*. As producer-director and star he returned to Broadway in *The Man in the Dog Suit* and a trilogy of one-act plays by Tennessee Williams, Chekhov and O'Casey entitled *Triple Play*. He returned to Hollywood to make *Sunrise at Campobello*, and in 1961 he appeared under the direction of Sir John Gielgud in *Big Fish*, *Little Fish*. Most recently he has been with Tyrone Guthrie's repertory company in Minneapolis in *The Miser*, *The Three Sisters* and *Death of a Salesman*. His latest motion picture role is in *Cleopatra*.

## Alfred Drake



The name of Alfred Drake has been happily associated with some of the most applauded modern theatrical productions. This native New Yorker's brilliant and varied career has been highlighted by starring roles in *Oklahoma!*, in which he created the role of Curley; his memorable performance in *Kiss Me Kate*, and three seasons in New York and London in the operetta triumph *Kismet*. Indeed, it would be but a half glance at the career of Alfred Drake to mention only these musical landmarks, since the dramatic stage has been richer for his performances as Orlando in *As You Like It* and Iago in *Othello* at the American Shakespeare Festival in Stratford, Connecticut. He also co-starred with Katherine Hepburn at Stratford and on a subsequent tour in *Much Ado About Nothing*. He was linked with success early in his career, when he was hailed as one of the fresh young talents in the Rodgers and Hart musical, *Babes in Arms*. Later triumphs were in *One for the Money*, *Two for the Show*, the musical *Beggars' Holiday*, *Out of the Frying Pan*, *Yesterday's Magic* and *Joy to the World*. Just two seasons ago, Mr. Drake scored another personal victory in the title role of the musical *Kean*. Home viewers have witnessed the versatility of Alfred Drake, too, in *Volpone*, *Marco Polo*, *Naughty Marietta*, *Yeoman of the Guard* and as a guest star on the leading variety and dramatic programs. Alfred Drake is one of the few performers on the logs of the American theatre who has been able to move with equal ease from the musical stage to the dramatic arena. Between starring performances he has directed numerous productions—and, of course, is on the original cast albums of his numerous musical hits. Most recently his translation of the Italian musical *Rugantino* has added to the enjoyment of that Broadway show, where the lines and lyrics were screened as English sub-titles.



## Eileen Herlie



Eileen Herlie's Broadway debut was her delightful performance as Mrs. Molloy in *The Matchmaker*, in 1956. This was followed by her starring roles in *Epitaph for George Dillon*, *The Makropolous Secret*, *Take Me Along* with Jackie Gleason, and *All American* with Ray Bolger. These musicals seem a far cry from Miss Herlie's background in her native England. At the Old Vic she appeared in *John Gabriel Borkman*, *The Alchemist*, *School For Scandal*, *Hamlet* and *He Who Gets Slapped*. She starred in the West End in *The Eagle Has Two Heads*, and then starred as Regina Giddens in *The Little Foxes* in London. Her many performances include *The Trojan Women*, *The Thracian Horses*, *Medea* and *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*. She co-starred with Sir John Gielgud in a season which included *The Way of The World* and *Venice Preserved*. Her Shakespearean experiences have been at the Old Vic and at Stratford, Ontario in *Much Ado About Nothing* and *The Winter's Tale*. She has played Gertrude before, opposite Sir Laurence Olivier in his film version; among others she appeared in the motion picture *Freud*. Her last Broadway appearance was in *Photo Finish* with Peter Ustinov.

## William Redfield



His mother was a Ziegfeld dancer and his father a musical director; young William Redfield made his first professional appearance at the age of nine in *Swing Your Lady*, at the Booth Theatre. Except for a two year hitch in the Infantry, he has spent all his time since then either on stage or in front of cameras. His childhood career embraced roles in *Our Town*, *Junior Miss* and *Excursion*. His biggest personal success before the war was as the army sergeant in *Snafu*, under the direction of George Abbott. Mr. Redfield's first part after the war was in Abbott's *Barefoot Boy with Cheek*, followed by *Out of This World*, the Cole Porter musical. A charter member of The Actor's Studio, his most recent Broadway appearance was in *A Man For All Seasons*. He played the part of Dr. Tim Cole on the TV soap opera, *As the World Turns*. Although the good doctor had to be killed off to release the actor after he'd played it for two years, he still receives mail from broken-hearted listeners. Mr. Redfield created the title role in *Montserrat* in New York; Richard Burton in London. Mr. Redfield is an experienced Shavian actor, a motion picture actor, a TV actor; his hobby is writing.



## George Rose



This production of *Hamlet* provides a happy reunion for actor George Rose and director John Gielgud. It was in Sir John's famed 1949 Royal Shakespeare production of *Much Ado About Nothing* that Mr. Rose scored his initial theatrical triumph. His success as Dogberry in that attraction proved to be the first in a series of critically-acclaimed comic performances that earned him the title of the finest Shakespearean clown among the new generation of actors. Subsequent appearances with Sir John in *Measure for Measure* (Pompey) and *The Winter's Tale* (Autolycus) confirmed this impression. Audiences on these shores know Mr. Rose most recently from his highly-praised performance as The Common Man in *A Man For All Seasons*, although he made his Broadway debut as far back as 1946 with the Old Vic Company. Mr. Rose joins the *Hamlet* company after three seasons on Broadway and on the national tour in Robert Bolt's prize-winning drama. This versatile performer has proved equally deft in many other contemporary offerings, including the London production of *The Chalk Garden* (directed by Sir John), as the Burgomaster with The Lunts in *The Visit*, and in a pair of successful West End revues. He has also appeared in nearly thirty motion pictures and made many TV appearances on both sides of the Atlantic—the most recent being the Hallmark production of *Pygmalion* in which he played Alfred Doolittle to Julie Harris's Eliza.

## George Voskovec



Last seen on Broadway with co-star Hal Holbrook in the two-character play *Do you Know The Milky Way?*, Mr. Voskovec had made his debut there in 1945 as *Trinculo* in Margaret Webster's production of *The Tempest*. His Broadway appearances include Sir John Gielgud's production of *Big Fish Little Fish*, *The Tenth Man*, *A Call on Kuprin*, *Festival* and *The Love of Four Colonels*. Last summer, he was the guest star at the American Shakespeare Festival in Stratford, Connecticut, as Caesar in Shaw's *Caesar and Cleopatra*. Two seasons ago, he was in the original company of the Off-Broadway hit *Brecht on Brecht*. In 1956 he won an "Obie" award for his portrayal of Uncle Vanya in the Off-Broadway revival of the Chekhov classic. The following season, he starred in the London production of *Diary of Anne Frank*. His motion picture credits, to name only a few, include *Butterfield 8*, *The Bravados* and *Twelve Angry Men*. He was the founder and producer, for three seasons, of the American Theatre of Paris. On television he has appeared in scores of starring parts ranging from Chekhov and Ibsen to *The Untouchables*. Prior to World War Two, Mr. Voskovec, in partnership with Jan Werich, was a leading playwright, producer, and star in his native Prague.

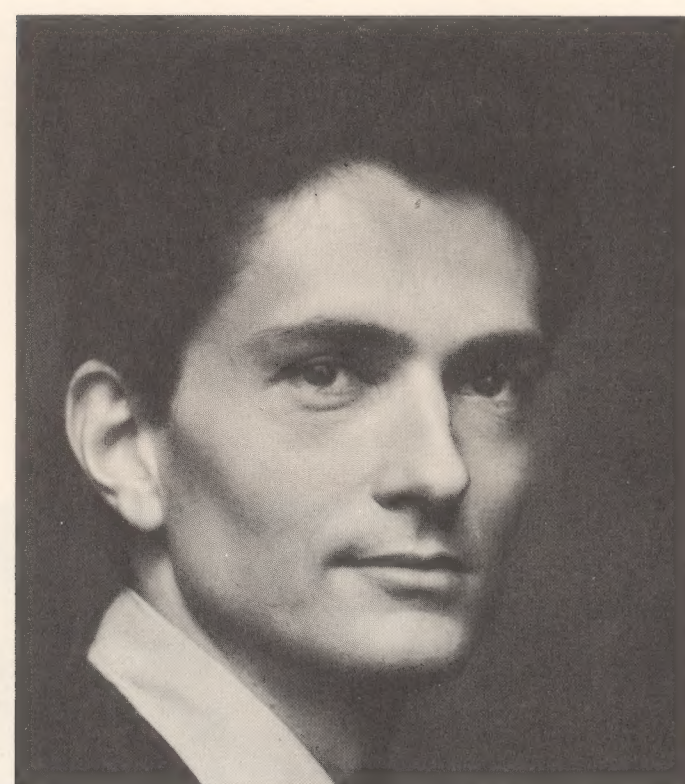




Philip Coolidge



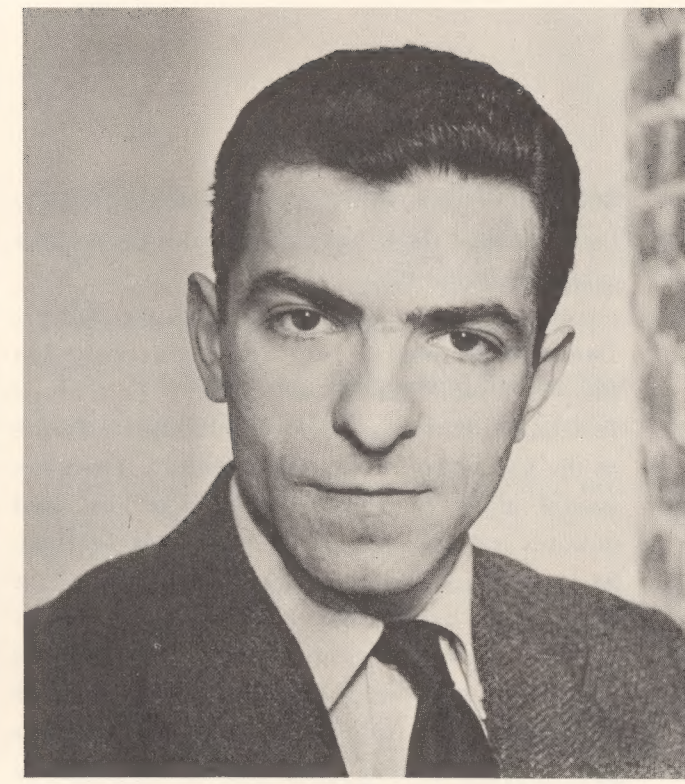
John Cullum



Michael Ebert



Dillon Evans

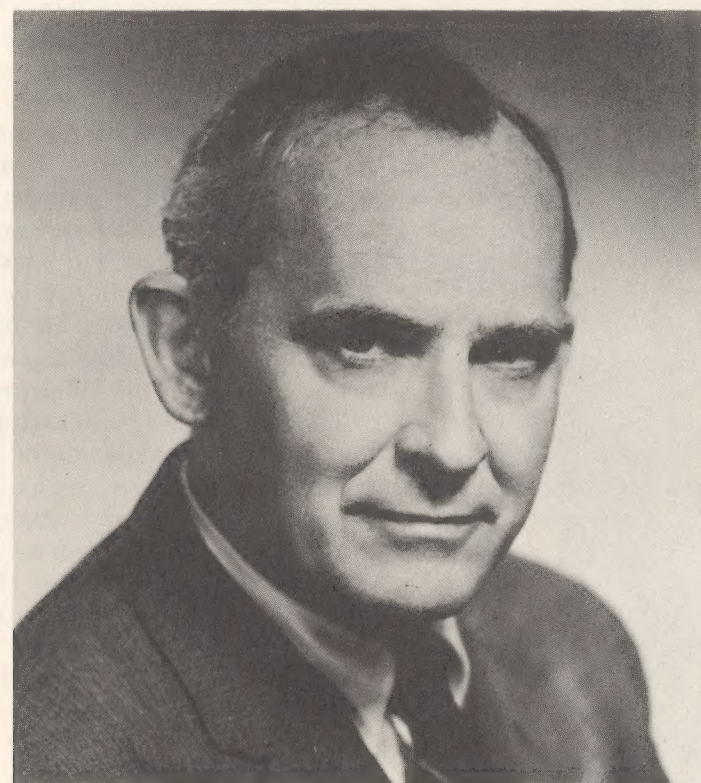


Clement Fowler



Geoff Garland

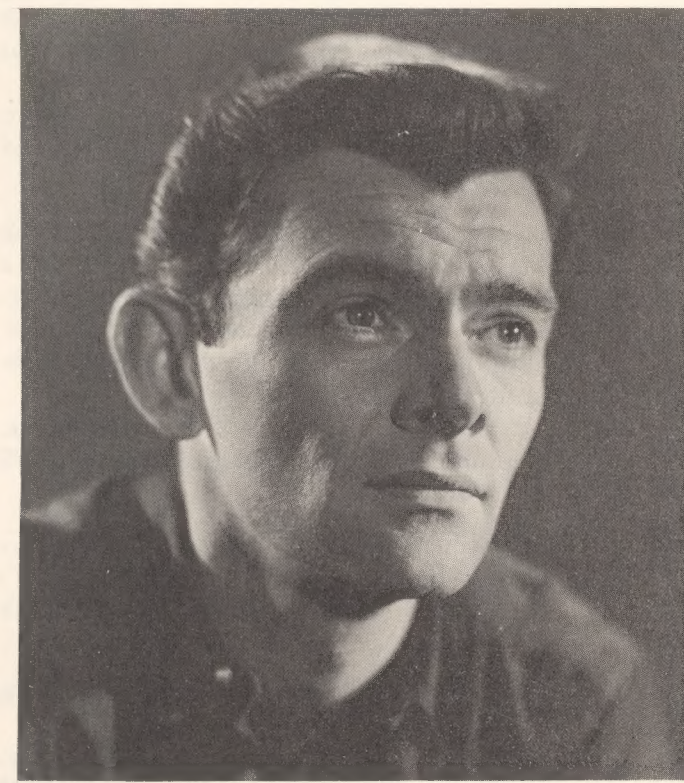
Barnard Hughes



Linda Marsh



Robert Milli



*and*

- Hugh Alexander
- Robert Burr
- Christopher Culkin
- Alex Giannini
- Claude Harz
- John Hetherington
- Gerome Ragni
- Linda Seff
- Richard Sterne
- Carol Teitel
- Frederick Young



# Books and Books and Books

More books have been written on the play *Hamlet* than any other single literary work with the possible exception of the Bible.

The story of *Hamlet* first appears in the *Historia Danica* in the middle of the thirteenth century but the play is more immediately based on Francois de Belleforest's *Histoires Tragiques* published in France in the last half of the sixteenth century. There are several references to *Hamlet* in the late 1580's and onwards and there was in actual fact a play of *Hamlet* in existence by about 1590. This may well have been written by Kyd and is similar in style to that author's *Spanish Tragedy*. There is, however, a school of thought which believes this was an earlier Shakespeare play. Shakespeare probably wrote his play in late 1601 and it was first published in the pirated First Quarto Edition two years later. This edition is terribly garbled; the character of Polonius appears as Corambis and more than two hundred lines do not appear in any other edition. There followed two years later the Second Quarto which was twice reprinted . . . this was most probably based on Shakespeare's original manuscript but also shows many careless printing errors. The First Folio again differs in text and most modern texts use the Second Quarto and First Folio of 1623 as their source.

Since then sixty German translations have been published, nearly thirty in French, nearly a dozen in Dutch, more in Italian, as many in Swedish, half a dozen in Spanish, three in Bohemian, an authoritative Welsh edition as well as several Russian editions, and editions in Greek, Polish, and virtually every other known language. In the English language there are over four hundred varying editions. The magnificent Variorum edition alone quotes nearly sixty sources for its text. There are literally thousands of books and articles on the play. Theories have been expounded on *Hamlet's* real or feigned madness by great psychologists and psychiatrists, great playwrights and critics, have praised and damned, millions of words have been written on *Hamlet's* love for or hatred of Ophelia . . . other authors have felt

that the Queen helped Claudius murder her first husband. The roster of critics reads like a who's who in literature. From Ben Jonson to Samuel Johnson, from Goethe and Schiller to Coleridge and Hazlitt, from Bradley and Madariaga to Strachey, Freud, and Dover Wilson, from Kellog to Jung and Cardinal Wiseman, from Ruskin to Lessing and Schlegel to Voltaire and Chateaubriand—the reams seem endless. To try to summarize even the most widely held opinions would seem a hopeless task in this short souvenir booklet. There follows therefore a number of quotations on the subject which the reader may find diverting:

I saw *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark* played, but now the old plays begin to disgust this refined age, since his Majesty's being so long abroad.

JOHN EVELYN, "Diary." November 26, 1661

To the Duke of York's Playhouse . . . and saw *Hamlet*, which we have not seen this year before, or more; and mightily pleased with it, but, above all, with Betterton, the best part, I believe, that ever man acted.

SAMUEL PEPYS,

Diary and Correspondence. August 31, 1668

Whatever defects the Critics may find in the Fable, the Moral of it is excellent. Here was a Murder privately committed, strangely discovered and wonderfully punished. Nothing in Antiquity can rival this Plot for the admirable distribution of Poetick Justice.

J. DRAKE,

Ancient and Modern Stages Surveyed. 1699

That piece of his, *The Tragedy of Hamlet* . . . appears to have most affected English Hearts . . .

ANTHONY, EARL OF SHAFTESBURY

The *Electra* of Sophocles, in many instances, is not unlike the *Hamlet* of Shakespeare.

JOHN UPTON,

Critical Observations on Shakespeare. 1748

Writing to Sir Horace Mann on May 24, 1760, Horace Walpole mentions that before the execution of Lord Ferrers, *Hamlet* was read to the prisoner at his own request.

The soliloquy (To be or not to be) in *Hamlet* which we have so often heard extolled in terms of admiration is, in our opinion, a heap of absurdities, whether we consider the situation, the sentiment, the argument or the poetry.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH, Works. (Prior Edn. 1765)

If the dramas of Shakespeare were to be characterised, each by the particular excellence which distinguishes it from the rest, we must allow to the tragedy of *Hamlet* the praise of variety.

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON,

Preface to Shakespeare. 1765

I believe the character of *Hamlet* may be traced to Shakespeare's deep and accurate science in mental philosophy. In order to understand him, it is essential that we should reflect on the constitution of our own minds.

SAMUEL COLERIDGE,

Notes and Lectures upon Shakespeare. 1808

*Hamlet* is singular in its kind: a tragedy of thought inspired by continual and never-satisfied meditation on human destiny and the dark perplexity of the events of this world.

A. W. SCHLEGEL,

Dramatic Art and Literature. 1810

Our first object today was Henrietta Street to consult with Henry, in consequence of a very unlucky change of the play for this very night—*Hamlet* instead of *King John*—and we are to go on Monday to *Macbeth*, instead, but it is a disappointment to us both. Love to all.

JANE AUSTEN, Letter dated April 18, 1811.

*Hamlet* is not the most admirable of Shakespeare's works; but Shakespeare is most admirable in *Hamlet*.

L. BOERNE, Dramatische Blätter. 1829

If Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is to be characterised in a word, it is the tragedy of the Nothingness of Reflection, or, as even this phrase may be varied, it is the tragedy of the Intellect . . . Next to *Faust*, *Hamlet* is the profoundest, boldest, most characteristic tragedy that has ever been written.

EDUARD GANS, Vermischte Schriften. 1834

*Hamlet*, that tragedy of maniacs, this Royal Bedlam, in which every character is either crazy or criminal . . .

FRANCOIS RENE DE CHATEAUBRIAND,

Sketches of English Literature. 1837

Hamlet! Hamlet! When I think of his moving wild speech, in which resounds the groaning of the whole numbered universe, there breaks from my soul not one reproach, not one sign . . .

FYODOR DOSTOEVSKY,

From a letter dated August 9, 1838

Every new enquirer, who has thought and written on *Hamlet*, believes that he has at last succeeded in satisfactorily solving the aesthetic problem here presented, or of explaining with convincing clearness either the character of *Hamlet* or the connection and internal unity of the complicated drama.

HERMANN ULRICI,

Shakespeare's Dramatic Art. 1839

To borrow an expression from the language of criticism in a sister art, the piece *Hamlet* is spotty. The spots are beautiful when contemplated in themselves, still they are but spots.

JOSEPH HUNTER, New Illustration of the Life, Studies and Writings of Shakespeare. 1845

*Hamlet's* mental condition furnishes in abundance the characteristic symptoms in wonderful harmony and consistency.

DR. RAY, American Journal of Insanity.

April 1847

*Hamlet*, in spite of a prejudice in certain circles that if now produced for the first time it would fail, is the most popular play in our language.

G. H. LEWES, Life of Goethe. 1855

As everyone knows who has watched life, the true springs of all human action are generally those which fools will not see, which wise men will not mention, so that, in order to present a readable tragedy of *Hamlet*, you must always omit the part of *Hamlet* and probably the Ghost and the Queen into the bargain.

CHARLES KINGSLEY, Two Years Ago. 1857

It is because *Hamlet* is eternally human that the play retains its lasting hold on our sympathies. We are all potential *Hamlets*.

HERBERT BEERBOHM TREE,

From an Actor's Prompt Book. 1895

"No man can stand the strain of *Hamlet*" explained Sir Henry (Irving) to me, "unless he begins playing it before the age of thirty-five."

SIR JOHN MARTIN HARVEY,

Some Reflections on *Hamlet*: 1916

Only one of Shakespeare's plays was not acceptable to his public, but was met with a storm of ridicule. And that was *Hamlet*. Today it has more productions than the rest of the plays put together.

LENA ASHWELL,

Reflections from Shakespeare. 1923

Some one fault or flaw may be found in the plots of most of the plays. *Hamlet* is a signal instance of this. It is crowded with faults. There are scenes which lead nowhere, and the main theme is very confusingly handled.

SIR JOHN SQUIRE,

Shakespeare as a Dramatist. 1935

So far from being Shakespeare's masterpiece, the play is most certainly an artistic failure.

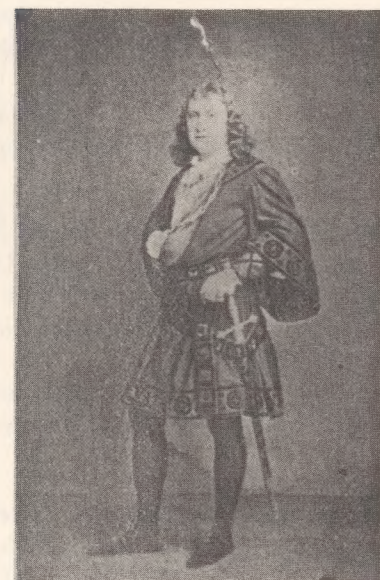
T. S. ELIOT. Selected Essays. 1919



# Men, Women and Children — Hamlets All

by George Eells  
Reprinted from *Theatre Arts*,  
January 1964

CHARLES FECHTER



With the approach of the four hundredth anniversary of Shakespeare's birth, the commemorative material will doubtless include, among other things, recollections of players who excelled in interpreting his great tragedy, *Hamlet*. But for my part, I'd much rather recall those players who for a time achieved enormous popularity—or at least notoriety—but are now only infrequently recalled.

In the 1850s an Irishman named Kearns performed solos between acts on bagpipes specially designed to play two tunes at the same time. (As an added attraction, the actress who played Ophelia to Kearns' Hamlet introduced a song, "We'll All Be Unhappy Together.") Then there was Hilliard Wight, "the best of the small-town Hamlets." And there were female Hamlets, infant interpreters of the prince, as well as what in a less inhibited time were called "bughouse Hamlets."

There is an aphorism that no actor fails completely and none succeeds totally in portraying Shakespeare's prince. From the point of view of the audience, a twelve-year-old child prodigy named William Henry West Betty, "The Young Roscius," almost earned that crown. Many held him to be superior to the great David Garrick. Master Betty, in fact, inspired a kind of Betty mania for a brief

period around 1805. Born in Shrewsbury, England, he first played Hamlet at twelve, having already scored with the populace in other roles. So great was his vogue that when he appeared in Edinburgh his disciples drove out of town a critic who impugned the master's acting ability. And when the actor made his debut at Covent Garden the mob of Betty boosters, impatient to gain entrance to the theatre, became so unruly that many were injured. Nor was his popularity confined to commoners. The Prince of Wales, for instance, entertained him at Carlton House. And on the motion of William Pitt, Parliament adjourned to see this remarkable child's interpretation of the melancholy Dane.

Among the other so-called "infant phenomena" were Master George Smith, Master W. R. Gros-smith, Master Joseph Burke and Master John Howard Payne. Payne, now more celebrated as the author of the song "Home Sweet Home," was both America's first native-born Hamlet and her first juvenile Hamlet. In May of 1809, the seventeen-year-old Payne undertook the role. Billed as "the favorite child of Thespis." Payne failed to impress most critics, whose verdicts can be summed up as "immature," "premature" and "amateur."

Irish-born Master Burke, or Master Joseph as he



THE YOUNG ROSCIUS,  
MASTER BETTY as HAMLET.

Ham: "Whither wilt thou lead me? Speak, I'll go no further."  
London: Pub. as the Act directs by J. Roach, Rufel Court Drury Lane Dec. 1818

was sometimes called, was five years old when he began to play Tom Thumb in 1818. Thereafter he enlarged his repertory with, among other roles, Shylock, Richard III, Sir Giles Overreach and Hamlet. His first United States appearance in the latter role occurred at the Park Theatre, New York, in 1830. Not content to exhibit just his histrionic ability, Burke at times offered comic songs, led the orchestra and played violin solos. As an adult he won recognition as a violinist and frequently appeared with Jenny Lind.

One child prodigy who never attempted Hamlet during her formative years was Clara Fisher, a contemporary of Master Burke. Clara waited until she grew up to play the prince. But at six years of age, in 1817, she was already appearing at London's Drury Lane. Her range included not only Juliet and Shylock, but operatic parts as well. And such a consummate artist was Little Clara, according to theatrical historians, that she caused the adult actors with whom she played to appear awkward and out of proportion. Unlike her male counterparts, Clara retained her popularity in maturity and eventually joined the long line of female Hamlets, whom Max Beerbohm once happily characterized as "Princesses of Denmark."

The first actress to undertake the role was Sarah Siddons, who began playing it at Manchester, England, in 1777. She occasionally offered it in the provinces for the next five years, but never braved London audiences and critics with it. Bold enough to attempt the part, she was shy about exposing her figure. The result: her Hamlet trod the boards modestly draped in a series of voluminous, fringed shawls. Among other originators were Jane Powell, first woman to play the part in London where she appeared at the Drury Lane on May 12, 1796, and Mrs. Bartley, who became the first woman to play the role in America when she brought her production to the Park Theatre on March 29, 1819.

From the beginning these female experiments seemed an invitation to mockery, as Julia Grover, who essayed the part for her London benefit in 1821, was well aware. Following the first interval, Edmund Kean appeared before her to cry, "Excellent! Excellent!" To which the forthright Miss Glover responded, "Away, you flatterer! You come in mockery to scorn and scoff our solemnity."

Female Hamlets have always been so treated, from Mrs. Inchbald in 1780; Mrs. Barnes, who first played the prince in 1819; Mrs. Battersby, three years later; Mrs. Shaw in 1839, followed in four years by Mrs. Brougham; Mrs. Bandmann-Palmer, who played

over 1,000 performances, beginning in 1895; Esme Berringer, who undertook the role at the age of sixty-four, in 1938; to Siobhan McKenna, who did a solo appearance in 1957. Even Charlotte Cushman, who was very comfortable playing both male and female roles, as her successes with *Lady Macbeth*, *Romeo*, *Shylock* and *Cardinal Wolsey* attest, failed to bring off her usual tour de force in Hamlet. Although her biographer and companion, Emma Stebbins, maintains that Miss Cushman resembled Macready in "appearance, expression of face, tone of voice and mode of speech . . ." that ". . . the matchless delivery . . . was a treat beyond comparison . . ." and that ". . . her commanding and well-made figure appeared to advantage in the dress of the princely Dane, and her long experience in the assumption of male parts took from her appearance all sense of incongruity . . ." the fact remains that she played the part only occasionally.

A typical response to these undertakings was accorded Julia Seaman, of whose performance Laurence Hutton once observed: ". . . (there is) Miss Julia Seaman, an English actress of fine figure, who played the Devil in the spectacle of *The White Faun* at Niblo's Garden, and who succeeded in doing as much with *Hamlet* at Booth's Theatre in 1874."

Nor was Sarah Bernhardt treated kindlier when in 1899, at fifty-five, she played the part. Her compatriot, Mounet-Sully, complimented her with "Superb! A magnificent impersonation. It lacks only fly buttons." While Max Beerbohm, after retitling the play, *Hamlet, Princess of Denmark*, went on to write: ". . . the only compliment one can conscientiously pay her is that her Hamlet was, from first to last, *très grande dame*."

In recent years, most actresses who have felt impelled to risk the part have done their experimenting in out-of-the-way places. Eva Le Gallienne, who included it in a list of roles she resolved to play before reaching forty, realizing that the performance might be ridiculed, bypassed Broadway and even the Westport Country Playhouse in Connecticut. Instead, she retreated to the somewhat isolated Cape Playhouse in Dennis, Massachusetts, where in 1936, with teenage Uta Hagen as Ophelia, she played the role. According to Miss Le Gallienne's account in her autobiography, *With a Quiet Heart*, people came to see a freak, but remained to yell bravo.

A number of freak Hamlets have also won their bravos from audiences. Some were offered seriously, others as ridicule. John Poole's celebrated travesty which was published in London in 1811 not only served such comedians as George Holland (who ap-

peared as the First Grave Digger and Ophelia, but not in the title role) and William Mitchell. It also gave rise to the idea of legitimate burlesques with such punning titles as *Cindernelly*, *Richard Number II* and *Lucy Did Lamm Her Moor*.

Among the numerous comic Hamlets, the first to attempt a travesty in America was Mr. Spiler in 1821, whose leading lady died suddenly and killed his production; Frank Chanfrau a few years later parodied the Hamlet of Macready in a presentation called *Mr. McGreedy*, and John Brougham still later played the part with a brogue.

George L. Fox, more famed for his *Humpty Dumpty* burlesque than his Hamlet, employed Edwin Booth's attitude and voice, Charles Fechter's French accent and mode of expression, plus the mannerisms of other now-forgotten players in a way that delighted everyone, including Booth. Fox's fur cap and arctic overshoes, which protected him from the chill night air, his undisguised fear of the ghost and his unexpected profanity when commanded by the ghost to swear, won praise both for him and for T. C. Leon, who adapted the travesty. It opened at the Olympic Theatre on February 14, 1870, and achieved what was for that time an amazing run of ten weeks in New York.

During the same period, the variety halls were besieged by what Douglas Gilbert in his book *American Vaudeville* says were called "bughouse or nut Hamlets." One of these was a competent actor named George Jones, who had frequently appeared in both England and America. Earlier, in fact, he had played Hamlet with some success. By the 1870s, however, his grasp on reality had slipped. He began calling himself Count Johannes. He also became an actor-manager, using amateurs in his supporting cast. These inept exhibitions convulsed audiences, who were unaware of Jones-Johannes' mental illness.

A contemporary of the "Count" was "Dr." Landis, the self-styled "greatest Hamlet who ever lived." These emotionally disturbed actors are both reported to have anticipated the Cherry Sisters by stretching nets across the proscenium arches to protect themselves and their cohorts from high-spirited audiences who come armed with ripe fruit. But, as in the case of the Cherry Sisters, no proof exists that such a device was actually used, although one account does add an intriguing touch, claiming that the "Count" drew audiences away from the great Edwin Booth by substituting a low net for the high ones—making it possible for galleryites to pitch their ripe ammunition over the top.

Of a different ilk was vaudevillian Will Morrissey.





WILLIAM MACREADY

SARAH BERNHARDT



Legend has it that in pre-union days, when Morrissey was "at liberty and without walking-around-money," he would sell tickets to his solo Hamlet. Having enlisted the services of the nightwatchman of an empty theatre as co-producer (the watchman turned on the lights and unlocked the front doors), Morrissey would bootleg Hamlet for their mutual profit.

Showboater Billy Bryant also did Hamlet for strictly monetary reasons. Bryant turned to travesty when audiences grew bored with regular river drama in the early 1930s. He had never understood why anyone wanted to do Shakespeare seriously, but saw possibilities in a hashed-up version of the tragedy which included Shylock, the witches from *Macbeth* and assorted modern thugs. He called his desecration *Hamlet and Yeggs*. In the bigger river towns of Ohio and in such cities as New York, St. Louis and Chicago, the production played to turn-away business. Crowds were delighted by Bryant's brash warning that the play got worse as it went along, and by his admission that all his troupe was interested in was getting the audiences' money. Like Liberace, who gloated that people could say what they liked, he'd laugh all the way to the bank. Bryant's stock reply to detractors was that "the hen that lays the golden egg has a perfect right to cackle."

Ego rather than greed seems to have motivated the human puppet Hamlet of Bellew. In his book, *Hamlet*, Henry Phelps observed: "I did see that very extraordinary performance, such a strange vagary on the part of poor J. M. Bellew, who stood at a desk before the proscenium and declaimed the speeches of all the characters in turn, while persons of the drama, mere human marionettes, trod the stage with appropriate gestures, and moved their lips as though they were speaking. I thought this the most ludicrous thing I had ever witnessed."

On a wholly different level is my personal favorite, Hilliard Wight, a small-town Hamlet who barnstormed the Midwest for 30 years and now lives in Great Bend, Kansas. Born in the Ozark hills, near Fort Smith, Arkansas, in 1871, Wight decamped at fourteen and soon encountered a production of *The Slave Girl*, starring Maude Granger. This performance provided him with an objective—to become an actor. Beating his way to San Francisco, he discovered that his hillbilly accent barred him from speaking roles. So he paid a manager \$5 to teach him to pronounce his vowels. With his newly acquired "stage diction," Wight hopped a freight headed for New York. There he worked as a dishwasher while

educating himself in the reading rooms of the public library.

On occasion he secured engagements with small repertory companies and in one of these he encountered a lovely soubrette whose name, Amber, appealed to him. Her interest in the classics pleased him even more. He suggested that they wed and form a show.

A few years later, in Doon, Iowa, the Wights found themselves with four hundred dollars stashed in their grouchbag and an opportunity to buy a quantity of painted scenery for the ten dollars due as freight charges. Wight bought the scenery and hired eight actors from "the repertory capital of the world," as Kansas City, Missouri, was once known. Then for 30 years the Wight Dramatic Company beat its way up and down and across the country, appearing in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, *Richard III*, *The Three Musketeers*, *Richelieu* and even an occasional Toby show. Wight's favorite part, however, was Hamlet.

The actor, who stands only five feet, five inches tall, likes to point out today that he was never suited to the part physically, but that he was always a roaring success in it. For example, one small-town opera house owner who was not interested in anything except the gross sent his report on the Wight's engagement to *The Opera House Reporter* (an early trade magazine) giving the receipts and commenting, "Mr. and Mrs. Hamlet were good."

How does Wight explain his success?

"Stage presence," the ninety-two-year-old thespian says. "The ability to create illusion. That's what I had. What all true actors have. By mere presence on stage an actor can create any image he wants. Make himself tall or short or thin or strong. Putty, wigs, greasepaint—none of these are half as important as his ability to create the illusion of becoming the person the role demands. Illusion—that's the thing," he says. As he speaks, despite the fact that his voice has been impaired by a throat operation, for a fleeting moment he calls up the illusion of what he once was—"the best of the small-town Hamlets."

This brief survey touches upon only a few of the remarkable guises in which Shakespeare's tragic prince has been shown. It ignores the ballet, operatic and film versions. But it also indicates that M.E.W. Sherwood of the *New York Times* understated the case when just after the Civil War he wrote a piece discussing the merits of such contrasting interpretations as those of Edwin Booth and Charles Fechter. Sherwood "wondered anew at the genius of Shakespeare who could have written two such different and distinct Hamlets." Two? Two hundred.

## Alexander H. Cohen

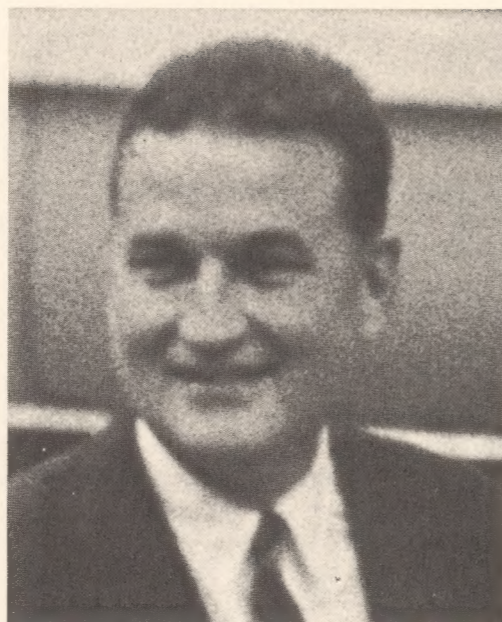


Showmen and innovators come few and far between. Today, Alexander H. Cohen is the man to take note of in the theatre if you like to hear a new idea expressed with clarity and demonstrated with quality and appropriate fanfare. Mr. Cohen commenced his career in the theatre in 1941 as the co-producer of Patrick Hamilton's *Angel Street*. Among his other Broadway productions is the same author's *The Duke in Darkness* which starred Philip Merivale, Louis Calhern in John Houseman's production of *King Lear*, *Make A Wish* with Nanette Fabray, Walter Slezak in Tyrone Guthrie's production of *The First Gentleman*, the all-star revival of Sheridan's *The School for Scandal*, John Gielgud's *Ages of Man* and Maurice Chevalier's one man show. He introduced Jean Kerr to Broadway by sponsoring her first play, *Jenny Kissed Me*, which starred Leo G. Carroll and last season did the same for Jack Richardson with *Lorenzo*. Under the banner of his popular and distinctive Nine O'Clock Theatre, he has presented four successive hits, commencing in 1959 with Michael Flanders and Donald Swann in *At the Drop of a Hat* followed by *An Evening with Mike Nichols and Elaine May*, *Yves Montand* and the incumbent *Beyond the Fringe 1964*. He is presently preparing *Baker Street*, a musical adventure about Sherlock Holmes, which will open on Broadway next season. He is active in the management of road theatres, notably the magnificent O'Keefe Centre in Toronto. He is a pioneer in the concept of packaged entertainments and the creator of Theatre Tours. Mr. Cohen is a member of the Board of Governors of the League of New York Theatres and the Council of the Living Theatre; he is a director of the Independent Booking Office, and a trustee of the Actors' Fund of America. He is married to stage and television actress Hildy Parks.



## Ben Edwards

A native of Union Springs, Alabama, a graduate of the Feagin School of the Theatre, where he studied scene design under Milton Smith, now head of the Columbia University Drama Department, Ben Edwards began his career in summer theatres, including Marblehead, Massachusetts and the Barter Theatre in Virginia. His Broadway work interrupted by a four year stint in the Army, he returned after the war to create the settings for such plays as *Medea*, *Sundown Beach*, *The Time of the Cuckoo*, *Anastasia*, *The Waltz of the Toreadors*, *The Dark at the Top of the Stairs*, *A Shot in the Dark*, *The Aspern Papers*, etc. For one season he was the designer for TV's Armstrong Circle Theatre and for another season he designed for the City Center. He has co-produced *Big Fish*, *Little Fish*, and this season's *Ballad of the Sad Cafe*.



## Jane Greenwood

Jane Greenwood was born in Liverpool, England and attended The Central School of Arts and Crafts in London. She went with the Oxford Repertory where she supervised the costumes. From the home country she migrated to Canada, where for two years she added her talents to the Stratford Shakespeare Festival in Stratford, Ontario. She costumed the *Romeo and Juliet* which starred Julie Harris, and *Cyrano de Bergerac* and *King John* with Christopher Plummer. Her work brought her to New York and an association with Ray Diffen, with whom she co-designed the off-Broadway production of *The Importance of Being Earnest*. Her first Broadway assignment was *The Ballad of the Sad Cafe*, which was co-produced by her husband, Ben Edwards.



## Jean Rosenthal

The list of Miss Rosenthal's credits in the theatre is staggering. This season she has performed her lighting magic on *Barefoot in the Park* and *Hello, Dolly*. From 1949 to 1957 she served the New York City Center Ballet Company as its lighting and production supervisor. She was also general production supervisor for the American Shakespeare Festival in Stratford, Connecticut, and has been the lighting director for Martha Graham's dance company since 1938. On Broadway, just to list a few plays which have benefitted from her touch, are *West Side Story*, *Take Me Along*, *Becket*, *Sound of Music*, *Ballad of the Sad Cafe*, *Jamaica*, and *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*.



# A CATALOGVE

of the feuerall Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies contained in this Volume.

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THE CATALOGUE OF SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS  
A facsimile from the First Folio

THIS BOOK PUBLISHED BY DUNETZ & LOVETT,

130 WEST 57th STREET, NEW YORK 10019

DESIGNED BY TOM HANNAN

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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by WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

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starring RICHARD BURTON,  
HUME CRONYN, ALFRED DRAKE,  
EILEEN HERLIE, WILLIAM REDFIELD,  
GEORGE ROSE, GEORGE VOSKOVEC  
And Original Broadway Cast

1. Act I, Scene 1
2. Act I, Scene 2

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2. Act I, Scene 4
3. Act I, Scene 5

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2. Act II, Scene 2, Beginning

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2. Act III, Scene 1

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And Original Broadway Cast

- 1. Act III, Scene 2
- 2. Act III, Scene 3, Beginning

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EILEEN HERLIE, WILLIAM REDFIELD,  
GEORGE ROSE, GEORGE VOSKOVEC  
And Original Broadway Cast

- 1. Act III, Scene 3, Conclusion
- 2. Act III, Scene 4
- 3. Act IV, Scene 1
- 4. Act IV, Scene 2
- 5. Act IV, Scene 3

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GEORGE ROSE, GEORGE VOSKOVEC  
And Original Broadway Cast

1. Act IV, Scene 4
2. Act IV, Scenes 5 and 7

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1. Act V, Scene 1
2. Act V, Scene 2

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